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Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic

The following translation of the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Republic is made from an official printed text embodying the latest revisions, and required by law to be posted in all public places in Russia.

Resolution of the 5th All-Russian Congress of Soviets, Adopted on July 10, 1918.

THE declaration of rights of the laboring and exploited people (approved by the third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January, 1918), together with the Constitution of the Soviet Republic, approved by the fifth Congress, constitutes a single fundamental law of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

This fundamental law becomes effective upon the publication of the same in its entirety in the "Izvestia of the All-Russian General Executive Committee." It must be published by all organs of the Soviet Government and must be posted in a prominent place in every Soviet institution.

The fifth Congress instructs the People's Commissariat of Education to introduce in all schools and educational institutions of the Russian Republic the study and explanation of the basic principles of this Constitution.

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Article One

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE LABORING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE

Chapter One

1. Russia is declared to be a Republic of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. All the central and local power belongs to these Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is organized on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

Chapter Two

3. Bearing in mind as its fundamental problem the abolition of the exploitation of men by men, the entire abolition of the division of the people into classes, the suppression of exploiters, the establishment of a Socialist society, and the victory of socialism in all lands, the third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies further resolves:

(a) For the purpose of attaining the socialization of land, all private property in land is abolished, and the entire land is declared to be national property and is to be apportioned among agriculturists without any compensation to the former owners, in the measure of each one's ability to till it.

(b) All forests, treasures of the earth, and waters of general public utility, all equipment whether animate or inanimate, model farms and agricultural enterprises, are declared to be national property.

(c) As a first step toward complete transfer of ownership to the Soviet Republic of all factories, mills, mines, railways, and other means of production and transportation, the Soviet law for the control by workmen and the establishment of the Supreme Soviet of National Economy is hereby confirmed, so as to insure the power of the workers over the exploiters.

(d) With reference to international banking and finance, the third Congress of Soviets is discussing the Soviet decree regarding the annulment of loans made by the Government of the Czar, by landowners and the bourgeoisie, and it trusts that the Soviet Government will firmly follow this course until the final victory of the international workers' revolt against the oppression of capital.

(e) The transfer of all banks to the ownership of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, as one of the conditions of the

liberation of the toiling masses from the yoke of capital, is confirmed.

(f) Universal obligation to work is introduced for the purpose of eliminating the parasitic strata of society and organizing the economic life of the country.

(g) For the purpose of securing the working class in the possession of complete power, and in order to eliminate all possibility of restoring the power of the exploiters, it is decreed that all workers be armed, and that a Socialist Red Army be organized and the propertied class disarmed.

Chapter Three

4. Expressing its fixed resolve to liberate mankind from the grip of capital and imperialism, which flooded the earth with blood in its present most criminal of all wars, the third Congress of Soviets fully agrees with the Soviet Government in its policy of abrogating secret treaties, of organizing on a wide scale the fraternization of the workers and peasants of the belligerent armies, and of making all efforts to conclude a general democratic peace without annexations or indemnities, upon the basis of the free determination of peoples.

5. It is also to this end that the third Congress of Soviets insists upon putting an end to the barbarous policy of the bourgeois civilization which enables the exploiters of a few chosen nations to enslave hundreds of millions of the working population of Asia, of the colonies, and of small countries generally.

6. The third Congress of Soviets hails the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the full independence of Finland, in withdrawing troops from Persia, and in proclaiming the right of Armenia to self-determination.

Chapter Four

7. The third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies believes that now, during the progress of the decisive battle between the proletariat and its exploiters, the exploiters should not hold a position in any branch of the Soviet Government. The power must belong entirely to the toiling masses and to their plenipotentiary representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

8. In its effort to create a league—free and voluntary, and for that reason all the more complete and secure—of the working classes of all the peoples of Russia, the third Congress of Soviets merely establishes the fundamental principles of the Federation of Russian Soviet Republics, leaving to the workers and peasants of every people to decide the following question

at their plenary sessions of their Soviets, namely, whether or not they desire to participate, and on what basis, in the Federal Government and other Federal Soviet institutions.

Article Two

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERAL SOVIET REPUBLIC

Chapter Five

9. The fundamental problem of the constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic involves, in view of the present transition period, the establishment of a dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a powerful All-Russian Soviet authority, for the purpose of abolishing the exploitation of men by men and of introducing socialism, in which there will be neither a division into classes nor a state of autocracy.

10. The Russian Republic is a free Socialist society of all the working people of Russia. The entire power, within the boundaries of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, belongs to all the working people of Russia, united in urban and rural Soviets.

11. The Soviets of those regions which differentiate themselves by a special form of existence and national character may unite in autonomous regional unions, ruled by the local Congress of the Soviets and their executive organs.

These autonomous regional unions participate in the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic upon a federal basis.

12. The supreme power of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic belongs to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and, in periods between the convocation of the Congress, to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

13. For the purpose of securing to the workers real freedom of conscience, the church is to be separated from the state and the school from the church, and the right of religious and anti-religious propaganda is accorded to every citizen.

14. For the purpose of securing freedom of expression to the toiling masses, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic abolishes all dependence of the press upon capital, and turns over to the working people and the poorest peasantry all technical and material means for the publication of newspapers,

pamphlets, books, etc., and guarantees their free circulation throughout the country.

15. For the purpose of enabling the workers to hold free meetings, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic offers to the working class and to the poorest peasantry furnished halls, and takes care of their heating and lighting appliances.

16. The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, having crushed the economic and political power of the propertied classes, and having thus abolished all obstacles which interfered with the freedom of organization and action of the workers and peasants, offers assistance, material and other, to the workers and the poorest peasantry in their effort to unite and organize.

17. For the purpose of guaranteeing to the workers real access to knowledge, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic sets itself the task of furnishing full and general free education to the workers and the poorest peasantry.'

18. The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic considers work the duty of every citizen of the Republic, and proclaims as its motto: "He shall not eat who does not work."

19. For the purpose of defending the victory of the great peasants' and workers' revolution, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic recognizes the duty of all citizens of the Republic to come to the defence of their Socialist Fatherland, and it therefore introduces universal military training. The honor of defending the revolution with arms is accorded only to the workers, and the non-working elements are charged with the performance of other military duties.

20. In consequence of the solidarity of the workers of all nations, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic grants all political rights of Russian citizens to foreigners who live in the territory of the Russian Republic and are engaged in work and who belong to the working class. The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic also recognizes the right of local Soviets to grant citizenship to such foreigners without complicated formality.

21. The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic offers shelter to all foreigners who seek refuge from political or religious persecution.

22. The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, recognizing the equal rights of all citizens, irrespective of their racial or national connections, proclaims all privileges on this ground, as well as oppression of national minorities, to be contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic.

23. Being guided by the interests of the working class as a whole, the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic deprives all individuals and groups of rights which could be utilized by them to the detriment of the Socialist Revolution.

Article Three

ORGANIZATION OF THE SOVIET POWER

A. ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRAL POWER

Chapter Six

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks', and Red Army Deputies

24. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets is the supreme power of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

25. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets is composed of representatives of urban Soviets (one delegate for 25,000 voters), and of representatives of the provincial (*Gubernia*) congresses of Soviets (one delegate for 125,000 inhabitants).

Note 1: In case the Provincial Congress is not called before the All-Russian Congress is convoked, delegates for the latter are sent directly from the County (*Ouezd*) Congress.

Note 2: In case the Regional (*Oblast*) Congress is convoked indirectly, previous to the convocation of the All-Russian Congress, delegates for the latter may be sent by the Regional Congress.

26. The All-Russian Congress is convoked by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee at least twice a year.

27. A special All-Russian Congress is convoked by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee upon its own initiative, or upon the request of local Soviets having not less than one-third of the entire population of the Republic.

28. The All-Russian Congress elects an All-Russian Central Executive Committee of not more than 200 members.

29. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee is entirely responsible to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

30. In the periods between the convocation of the Congresses, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee is the supreme power of the Republic.

Chapter Seven

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee

31. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee is the supreme legislative, executive, and controlling organ of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

32. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee directs in a general way the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and of all organs of the Soviet authority in the country, and it coördinates and regulates the operation of the Soviet Constitution and of the resolutions of the all-Russian Congresses and of the central organs of the Soviet power.

33. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee considers and enacts all measures and proposals introduced by the Soviet of People's Commissars or by the various departments, and it also issues its own decrees and regulations.

34. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee convokes the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, at which time the Executive Committee reports on its activity and on general questions.

35. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee forms a Council of People's Commissars for the purpose of general management of the affairs of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, and it also forms departments (People's Commissariats) for the purpose of conducting various branches.

36. The members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee work in the various departments (People's Commissariats) or execute special orders of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

Chapter Eight

The Council of People's Commissars

37. The Council of People's Commissars is entrusted with the general management of the affairs of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

38. For the accomplishment of this task the Council of People's Commissars issues decrees, resolutions, orders, and, in general, takes all steps necessary for the proper and rapid conduct of government affairs.

39. The Council of People's Commissars notifies immediately the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of all its orders and resolutions.

40. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee has the right to revoke or suspend all orders and resolutions of the Council of People's Commissars.

41. All orders and resolutions of the Council of People's Commissars of great political significance are referred for consideration and final approval to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

Note: Measures requiring immediate execution may be enacted directly by the Council of People's Commissars.

42. The members of the Council of People's Commissars stand at the head of the various People's Commissariats.

43. There are seventeen People's Commissars: (a) Foreign Affairs; (b) Army, (c) Navy, (d) Interior, (e) Justice, (f) Labor, (g) Social Welfare, (h) Education, (i) Post and Telegraph, (j) National Affairs, (k) Finances, (l) Ways of Communication, (m) Agriculture, (n) Commerce and Industry, (o) National Supplies, (p) State Control, (q) Supreme Soviet of National Economy, (r) Public Health.

44. Every Commissar has a Collegium [Committee] of which he is the President, and the members of which are appointed by the Council of People's Commissars.

45. A People's Commissar has the individual right to decide on all questions under the jurisdiction of his Commissariat, and he is to report on his decision to the Collegium. If the Collegium does not agree with the Commissar on some decisions, the former may, without stopping the execution of the decision, complain of it to the executive members of the Council of People's Commissars or to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

Individual members of the Collegium have this right also.

46. The Council of People's Commissars is entirely responsible to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

47. The People's Commissars and the Collegia of the People's Commissariats are entirely responsible to the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

48. The title of People's Commissar belongs only to the members of the Council of People's Commissars, which is in charge of general affairs of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, and it cannot be used by any other representative of the Soviet power, either central or local.

Chapter Nine

Affairs in the Jurisdiction of the All-Russian Congress and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee

49. The All-Russian Congress and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee deal with questions of state, such as:

(a) Ratification and amendment of the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(b) General direction of the entire interior and foreign policy of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(c) Establishing and changing boundaries, also ceding territory belonging to the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(d) Establishing boundaries for regional Soviet unions belonging to the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, also settling disputes among them.

(e) Admission of new members to the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, and recognition of the secession of any parts of it.

(f) The general administrative division of the territory of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic and the approval of regional unions.

(g) Establishing and changing weights, measures, and money denominations in the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(h) Foreign relations, declaration of war, and ratification of peace treaties.

(i) Making loans, signing commercial treaties and financial agreements.

(j) Working out a basis and a general plan for the national economy and for its various branches in the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(k) Approval of the budget of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

(l) Levying taxes and establishing the duties of citizens to the state.

(m) Establishing the bases for the organization of armed forces.

(n) State legislation, judicial organization and procedure, civil and criminal legislation, etc.

(o) Appointment and dismissal of the individual People's Commissars or the entire Council, also approval of the President of the Council of People's Commissars.

(p) Granting and cancelling Russian citizenship and fixing rights of foreigners.

(q) The right to declare individual and general amnesty.

50. Besides the above-mentioned questions, the All-Russian Congress and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee have charge of all other affairs which, according to their decision, require their attention.

51. The following questions are solely under the jurisdiction of the All-Russian Congress:

(a) Ratification and amendment of the fundamental principles of the Soviet Constitution.

(b) Ratification of peace treaties.

52. The decision of questions indicated in Paragraphs (c) and (h) of Section 49 may be made by the All-Russian Central Exec-

utive Committee only in case it is impossible to convoke the Congress.

B. ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL SOVIETS

Chapter Ten

The Congresses of the Soviets

53. Congresses of Soviets are composed as follows:

(a) Regional: of representatives of the urban and county Soviets, one representative for 25,000 inhabitants of the county, and one representative for 5,000 voters of the cities—but not more than 500 representatives for the entire region—or of representatives of the provincial Congresses, chosen on the same basis, if such a Congress meets before the regional Congress.

(b) Provincial (*Gubernia*): of representatives of urban and rural (*Volost*) Soviets, one representative for 10,000 inhabitants from the rural districts, and one representative for 2,000 voters in the city; altogether not more than 300 representatives for the entire province. In case the county Congress meets before the provincial, election takes place on the same basis, but by the county Congress instead of the rural.

(c) County: of representatives of rural Soviets, one delegate for each 1,000 inhabitants, but not more than 300 delegates for the entire county.

(d) Rural (*Volost*): of representatives of all village Soviets in the *Volost*, one delegate for ten members of the Soviet.

Note 1: Representatives of urban Soviets which have a population of not more than 10,000 persons participate in the county Congress; village Soviets of districts of less than 1,000 inhabitants unite for the purpose of electing delegates to the county Congress.

Note 2: Rural Soviets of less than ten members send one delegate to the rural (*Volost*) Congress.

54. Congresses of the Soviets are convoked by the respective Executive Committees upon their own initiative, or upon request of local Soviets comprising not less than one-third of the entire population of the given district. In any case they are convoked at least twice a year for regions, every three months for provinces and counties, and once a month for rural districts.

55. Every Congress of Soviets (regional, provincial, county, or rural) elects its Executive organ—an Executive Committee the membership of which shall not exceed: (a) for regions and provinces, twenty-five; (b) for a county, twenty; (c) for a rural district, ten. The Executive Committee is responsible to the Congress which elected it.

56. In the boundaries of the respective territories the Congress is the supreme power; during intervals between the convocations of the Congress, the Executive Committee is the supreme power.

Chapter Eleven

The Soviet of Deputies

57. Soviets of Deputies are formed:

(a) In cities, one deputy for each 1,000 inhabitants; the total to be not less than fifty and not more than 1,000 members.

(b) All other settlements (towns, villages, hamlets, etc.) of less than 10,000 inhabitants, one deputy for each 100 inhabitants; the total to be not less than three and not more than fifty deputies for each settlement.

Term of the deputy, three months.

Note: In small rural sections, whenever possible, all questions shall be decided at general meetings of voters.

58. The Soviet of Deputies elects an Executive Committee to deal with current affairs; not more than five members for rural districts, one for every fifty members of the Soviets of cities, but not more than fifteen and not less than three in the aggregate (Petrograd and Moscow not more than forty). The Executive Committee is entirely responsible to the Soviet which elected it.

59. The Soviet of Deputies is convoked by the Executive Committee upon its own initiative, or upon the request of not less than one-half of the membership of the Soviet; in any case at least once a week in cities, and twice a week in rural sections.

60. Within its jurisdiction the Soviet, and in cases mentioned in Section 57, Note, the meeting of the voters is the supreme power in the given district.

Chapter Twelve

Jurisdiction of the local organs of the Soviets

61. Regional, provincial, county, and rural organs of the Soviet power and also the Soviets of Deputies have to perform the following duties:

(a) Carry out all orders of the respective higher organs of the Soviet power.

(b) Take all steps for raising the cultural and economic standard of the given territory.

(c) Decide all questions of local importance within their respective territories.

(d) Coördinate all Soviet activity in their respective territories.

62. The Congresses of Soviets and their Executive Committees have the right to control the activity of the local Soviets (*i. e.*, the regional Congress controls all Soviets of the respective region; the provincial, of the respective province, with the exception of the urban Soviets, etc.); and the regional and provincial Congresses and their Executive Committees have in addition the right to overrule the decisions of the Soviets of their districts, giving notice in important cases to the central Soviet authority.

63. For the purpose of performing their duties, the local Soviets, rural and urban, and the Executive Committees form sections respectively.

Article Four

THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

Chapter Thirteen.

64. The right to vote and to be elected to the Soviets is enjoyed by the following citizens of both sexes, irrespective of religion, nationality, domicile, etc., of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, who shall have completed their eighteenth year by the day of election:

(a) All who have acquired the means of livelihood through labor that is productive and useful to society, and also persons engaged in housekeeping which enables the former to do productive work, *i. e.*, laborers and employees of all classes who are employed in industry, trade, agriculture, etc., and peasants and Cossack agricultural laborers who employ no help for the purpose of making profits.

(b) Soldiers of the army and navy of the Soviets.

(c) Citizens of the two preceding categories who have in any degree lost their capacity to work.

Note 1: Local Soviets may, upon approval of the central power, lower the age standard mentioned herein.

Note 2: Non-citizens mentioned in Section 20 (Article Two, Chapter 5) have the right to vote.

65. The following persons enjoy neither the right to vote nor the right to be voted for, even though they belong to one of the categories enumerated above, namely:

(a) Persons who employ hired labor in order to obtain from it an increase in profits.

(b) Persons who have an income without doing any work, such as interest from capital, receipts from property, etc.

- (c) Private merchants, trade and commercial brokers.
- (d) Monks and clergy of all denominations.
- (e) Employees and agents of the former police, the gendarme corps, and the *Okhrana* [Czar's secret service], also members of the former reigning dynasty.
- (f) Persons who have in legal form been declared demented or mentally deficient, and also persons under guardianship.
- (g) Persons who have been deprived by a Soviet of their rights of citizenship because of selfish or dishonorable offences, for the period fixed by the sentence.

Chapter Fourteen

Elections

66. Elections are conducted according to custom on days fixed by the local Soviets.

67. Election takes place in the presence of an election committee and the representative of the local Soviet.

68. In case the representative of the Soviet cannot for valid causes be present, the chairman of the election committee takes his place, and in case the latter is absent, the chairman of the election meeting replaces him.

69. Minutes of the proceedings and results of elections are to be compiled and signed by the members of the election committee and the representative of the Soviet.

70. Detailed instructions regarding the election proceedings and the participation in them of professional and other workers' organizations are to be issued by the local Soviets, according to the instructions of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

Chapter Fifteen

The checking and cancellation of elections and recall of the deputies

71. The respective Soviets receive all the records of the proceedings of the election.

72. The Soviet appoints a commission to verify the election.

73. This commission reports the results to the Soviet.

74. The Soviet decides the question when there is doubt as to which candidate is elected.

75. The Soviet announces a new election if the election of one candidate or another cannot be determined.

76. If an election was irregularly carried on in its entirety, it may be declared void by a higher Soviet authority.

77. The highest authority in relation to questions of elections is the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

78. Voters who have sent a deputy to the Soviet have the right to recall him, and to have a new election, according to general provisions.

Article Five

THE BUDGET

Chapter Sixteen

79. The financial policy of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic in the present transition period of dictatorship of the proletariat facilitates the fundamental purpose of expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the preparation of conditions necessary for the equality of all citizens of Russia in the production and distribution of wealth. To this end it sets forth as its task the supplying of the organs of the Soviet power with all necessary funds for local and state needs of the Soviet Republic, without regard to private property rights.

80. The state expenditure and income of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic are combined in the state budget.

81. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets or the All-Russian Central Executive Committee determine what matters of income and taxation shall go to the state budget and what shall go to the local Soviets; they also set the limits of taxes.

82. The Soviets levy taxes only for the local needs. The state needs are covered by the funds of the state treasury.

83. No expenditure out of the state treasury not set forth in the budget of income and expense shall be made without a special order of the central power.

84. The local Soviets shall receive credits from the proper People's Commissars out of the state treasury, for the purpose of making expenditures for general state needs.

85. All credits allotted to the Soviets from the state treasury, and also credits approved for local needs, must be expended according to the estimates, and cannot be used for any other purposes without a special order of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Soviet of People's Commissars.

86. Local Soviets draw up semi-annual and annual estimates of income and expenditure for local needs. The estimates of urban and rural Soviets participating in county congresses, and also the estimates of the county organs of the Soviet power, are to be approved by provincial and regional congresses or by their executive committees; the estimates of the urban, provincial,

and regional organs of the Soviets are to be approved by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars.

87. The Soviets may ask for additional credits from the respective People's Commissariats for expenditures not set forth in the estimate, or where the allotted sum is insufficient.

88. In case of an insufficiency of local funds for local needs, the necessary subsidy may be obtained from the state treasury by applying to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee or the Council of People's Commissars.

Article Six

THE COAT OF ARMS AND FLAG OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERAL SOVIET REPUBLIC

Chapter Seventeen

89. The coat of arms of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic consists of a red background on which a golden scythe and a hammer are placed (crosswise, handles downward) in sun-rays and surrounded by a wreath, inscribed:

Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic

Workers of the World, Unite!

90. The commercial, naval, and army flag of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic consists of a red cloth, in the left corner of which (on top, near the pole) are in golden characters the letters R. S. F. S. R., or the inscription: Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic.

Chairman of the fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets and
of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee—
J. Sverdlov.

Executive Officers—All-Russian Central Executive Committee:
T. I. Teodorovitch, F. A. Rosin, A. P. Rosenholz, A. C.
Mitrofanov, K. G. Maximov.

Secretary of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee—
V. A. Avanessov.

Laws and Decrees

The following documents are taken in part from a collection in the Library of Congress at Washington and in part from a volume of laws, regulations, and decrees published by the Executive Committee of the Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of the province of Tomsk, Russia. The documents selected have appeared in various issues of the International Relations section of the *Nation*.

Land Law

THE "Fundamental Law of Socialization of the Land" went into effect in September, 1918, replacing the earlier and briefer Land Decree of November 7, 1917.

DIVISION I.

General Provisions.

ARTICLE 1. All property rights in the land, treasures of the earth, waters, forests, and fundamental natural resources within the boundaries of the Russian Federated Soviet Republic are abolished.

ARTICLE 2. The land passes over to the use of the entire laboring population without any compensation, open or secret, to the former owners.

ARTICLE 3. The right to use the land belongs to those who till it by their own labor, with the exception of special cases covered by this decree.

ARTICLE 4. The right to use the land cannot be limited by sex, religion, nationality, or foreign citizenship.

ARTICLE 5. The sub-surface deposits, the forests, waters, and fundamental natural resources are at the disposition (according to their character) of the county, provincial, regional, and Federal Soviet powers and are under the control of the latter. The method of disposition and utilization of the sub-surface deposits, waters, and fundamental natural resources will be dealt with by a special decree.

ARTICLE 6. All private live stock and inventoried property of non-laboring homesteads pass over without indemnification to the disposition (in accordance with their character) of the land departments of the county, provincial, regional, and Federal Soviets.

ARTICLE 7. All homestead structures mentioned in Article 6, as well as all agricultural appurtenances, pass over to the disposition (in accordance with their character) of the county, provincial, regional, and Federal Soviets without indemnification.

ARTICLE 8. All persons who are unable to work and who will be deprived of all means of subsistence by force of the decree socializing all lands, forests, inventoried property, etc., may receive a pension (for a lifetime or until the person becomes of age), upon the certification of the local courts and the land departments of the Soviet power, such as a soldier receives, until such time as the decree for the insurance of the incapacitated is issued.

ARTICLE 9. The apportionment of lands of agricultural value among the laboring people is under the jurisdiction of the Volostnoi [several villages], county, provincial, regional, and Federal land departments of the Soviets in accordance with their character.

ARTICLE 10. The surplus lands are under the supervision, in every republic, of the land departments of the regional and Federal Soviets.

ARTICLE 11. The land departments of the local and central Soviets are thus entrusted with the equitable apportionment of the land among the working agricultural population, and with the productive utilization of the natural resources. They also have the following duties:

(a) Creating favorable conditions for the development of the productive forces of the country by increasing the fertility of the land, improving agricultural technique, and, finally, raising the standard of agricultural knowledge among the laboring population.

(b) Creating a surplus fund of lands of agricultural value.

(c) Developing various branches of agricultural industry, such as gardening, cattle-breeding, dairying, etc.

(d) Accelerating the transition from the old unproductive system of field cultivation to the new productive one (under various climates), by a proper distribution of the laboring population in various parts of the country.

(e) Developing collective homesteads in agriculture (in preference to individual homesteads) as the most profitable system of saving labor and material, with a view to passing on to socialism.

ARTICLE 12. The apportionment of land among the laboring population is to be carried on on the basis of each one's ability to till it and in accordance with local conditions, so that the production and consumption standard may not compel some peasants to work beyond their strength; and at the same time it should give them sufficient means of subsistence.

ARTICLE 13. Personal labor is the general and fundamental source of the right to use the land for agricultural purposes. In addition, the organs of the Soviet power, with a view to raising the agricultural standard (by organizing model farms or experimental fields), are permitted to borrow from the surplus land fund (formerly belonging to the Crown, monasteries, clergy, or landowners) certain plots and to work them by labor paid by the state. Such labor is subject to the general rules of workmen's control.

ARTICLE 14. All citizens engaged in agricultural work are to be insured at the expense of the state against old age, sickness, or injuries which incapacitate them.

ARTICLE 15. All incapacitated agriculturists and the members of their families who are unable to work are to be cared for by the organs of the Soviet power.

ARTICLE 16. Every agricultural homestead is to be insured against fire, epidemics among cattle, poor crops, dry weather, hail, etc., by means of mutual Soviet insurance.

ARTICLE 17. Surplus profits, obtained on account of the natural fertility of the land or on account of its location near markets, are to be turned over for the benefit of social needs to the organs of the Soviet power.

ARTICLE 18. The trade in agricultural machinery and in seeds is monopolized by the organs of the Soviet power.

ARTICLE 19. The grain trade, internal as well as export, is to be a state monopoly.

DIVISION II.

Who Has the Right to Use the Land.

ARTICLE 20. Plots of land may be used in the Russian Federated Soviet Republic for the following social and private needs:

A. Cultural and educational:

1. The state, in the form of the organs of the Soviet power (Federal, regional, provincial, county, and rural).

2. Social organizations (under the control and by permission of the local Soviets).

B. For agricultural purposes:

3. Agricultural communities.

4. Agricultural associations.

5. Village organizations.

6. Individuals and families.

C. For construction purposes:

7. By the organs of the Soviet power.

8. By social organizations, individuals, and families (if the construction is not a means of obtaining profits).

9. By industrial, commercial, and transportation enterprises (by special permission and under the control of the Soviet power).

D. For constructing ways of communication:

10. By organs of the Soviet power (Federal, regional, provincial, county, and rural, according to the importance of the ways of communication).

DIVISION III.

The order in which land is apportioned.

ARTICLE 21. Land is given to those who wish to work it themselves for the benefit of the community and not for personal advantage.

ARTICLE 22. The following is the order in which land is given for personal agricultural needs:

1. To local agriculturists who have no land or a small amount of land, and to local agricultural workers (formerly hired), on an equal basis.

2. Agricultural emigrants who have come to a given locality after the issuance of the decree of socialization of the land.

3. Non-agricultural elements in the order of their registration at the land departments of the local Soviets.

Note: When arranging the order of the apportionment of land, preference is given to laboring agricultural associations over individual homesteads.

ARTICLE 23. For the purpose of gardening, fishing, cattle-breeding, or forestry, land is given on the following basis:

(1) land which cannot be tilled; (2) land which can be tilled, but which on account of its location is preferably to be used for other agricultural purposes.

ARTICLE 24. In rural districts, land is used for construction purposes in accordance with the decision of the local Soviets and the population.

In cities, land may be obtained in the order in which applications are filed with the respective local Soviets, if the construction planned does not threaten to harm the neighboring buildings and if it answers all other requirements of the building regulations.

Note: For the purpose of erecting social buildings, land is given regardless of the order in which applications are filed.

DIVISION IV.

The standard of agricultural production and consumption.

ARTICLE 25. The amount of land given to individual homesteads for agricultural purposes, with a view to obtaining means of subsistence, must not exceed the standard of agricultural production and consumption as determined on the basis indicated in the instruction following.

Instruction for determining the production and consumption standard for the use of land of agricultural value.

1. The whole of agricultural Russia is divided into as many climatic sections as there are field cultivation systems historically in existence at the given agricultural period.

2. For every agricultural section a special production and consumption standard is set. Within the section the standard may be changed in accordance with the climate and the natural fertility of the land, also in accordance with its location (near a market or railway) and other conditions which are of great local importance.

3. For an exact determination of the standard of each section, it is necessary to take an all-Russian agricultural census in the near future.

Note: After the socialization of the land has been accomplished, it is necessary to survey it immediately and to determine its topography.

4. The apportionment of land on the production and consumption basis among the agricultural population is to be carried on gradually in various agricultural sections, according to regulations stated herein.

Note: Until the socialization of land is entirely accomplished, the relations of agriculturists will be regulated by the land departments of the Soviets in accordance with a special instruction.

5. For the determination of the production and consumption

standard of a given climatic section, it is necessary to take the standard (an average agricultural homestead) of one of the counties of that section (or another agricultural standard of equal size) with a small population, and with such a proportion of various agricultural advantages as, in the opinion of the local inhabitants (regional or provincial congress of the land departments of the Soviets), will be recognized as the most normal, *i. e.*, the most favorable for the type of field cultivation which predominates in that climatic section.

6. For the determination of what an average agricultural homestead is, it is necessary to take into consideration only those lands which were actually in the possession of working peasants down to 1917, *i. e.*, lands bought by peasant organizations, associations, individuals, and entailed and rented lands.

7. Forests, sub-surface deposits, and waters are not to be considered in this determination.

8. Private lands which were never used for agricultural purposes, and which were actually in the possession of the state, private banks, monasteries, or land owners, will not be taken into consideration in this determination, as they will constitute the surplus land fund which will serve to supply the landless peasants and those who have less land than the peasants' production and consumption standard calls for.

9. For determining the entire amount of land which was in actual possession of the working peasants down to the revolution of 1917, it is necessary to determine its quantity according to its special character (field, pasture, meadow, drainage, gardens, orchards, estates).

10. This determination must be made in exact figures, as well as in the proportion of the entire quantity to each individual homestead, settlement, village; county, province, or region, or the entire climatic section of the given system of field cultivation.

11. When thus determining the entire quantity of land, it is necessary to determine the quality of each acre of a typical field or meadow by ascertaining the amount (in poods) of grain or hay yielded by an acre of land of the given section for the past ten years.

12. When determining the quantity and quality of land, it is necessary to determine at the same time the entire population of the given climatic section engaged in agriculture, and also that part of the population which subsists at the expense of agriculture.

13. The census of the inhabitants engaged in agricultural

work is to be taken by sex, age, and family for each homestead separately, and later the information obtained is to be classified by villages, counties, and provinces of the given section.

14. When taking the census of the population it is necessary to determine the number of workingmen and members dependent upon them, and for that purpose the entire population is divided into the following classes according to ages:

Those unable to work.

Girls.....to 12 years of age.
Boys.....to 12 years of age.
Men.....from 60 years of age.
Women.....from 50 years of age.

Those incapacitated by physical or mental illness are recorded separately.

[Those able to work.]

Men	from 18 to 60—1.0 unit of working strength				
Women	from 18 to 50—0.8	"	"	"	"
Boys	from 12 to 16—0.5	"	"	"	"
Girls	from 12 to 16—0.5	"	"	"	"
Boys	from 16 to 18—0.75	"	"	"	"
Girls	from 16 to 18—0.6	"	"	"	"

Note: These figures may be changed in accordance with climatic and customary conditions by decision of the appropriate organs of the Soviet power.

15. By dividing the number of acres by the number of working units, the number of acres to each unit may be obtained.

16. The number of incapacitated members to each working unit may be obtained by dividing the entire incapacitated element by the total of working units.

17. It is also necessary to describe and figure out the number of work animals and cattle that can be fed on one acre of land and with one working unit.

18. For determining what an average landowning peasant is in a county, it is necessary to ascertain the average acre in quality and fertility. This average is the sum of crops from various soils divided by the number of the soil categories [Paragraph 9?]

19. The average obtained as above is to serve as a basis for determining the production and consumption standard by which all the homesteads will be equalized from the surplus land fund.

Note: In case the average, as indicated above, obtained after preliminary calculations, proves insufficient for existence (see

Division 1, Article 12), it may be increased from the surplus land fund.

20. For determining the amount of land needed for additional distribution among peasants, it is necessary to multiply the number of acres of land to each working unit in a county by the sum of agricultural working units of the given climatic section, and to subtract from the product the amount of land which the working population have on hand.

21. Further, upon ascertaining the number of acres of land (in figures and percentage according to character) which the surplus land fund has, and comparing this figure with the quantity of land necessary for additional distribution among peasants who have not sufficient land, the following is to be determined: is it possible to confine the emigration within the boundaries of the given climatic section? If so, it is necessary to determine the size of the surplus land fund and its capacity. If it is not possible to confine it within the given climatic section, ascertain how many families will have to emigrate to another section.

Note: The main land departments of the Soviet power must be informed of the quantity of surplus land, as well as of a lack of the same; and the location, amount, and kind of unoccupied lands must be indicated.

22. When additional distribution takes place, it is necessary to know the exact amount and quality of land which the peasants have, the number of cattle on hand, the number of members of the families, etc.

23. When additional distribution takes place in accordance with the production and consumption standard, this standard must be raised in the following cases:

(1) When the working strength of a family is overtaxed by the number of incapacitated members; (2) when the land which the family has on hand is not sufficiently fertile; (3) in accordance with the quality of such land of the surplus fund as is given to the peasant (the same applies to meadows).

25. When an additional apportionment of land takes place and the given district lacks certain advantages, the peasant gets a certain amount of land possessing other advantages.

DIVISION V.

Standard for the Utilization of Land for Construction, Agricultural, and Educational Purposes, etc.

ARTICLE 26. When land is apportioned for educational and industrial purposes and also for the erection of dwellings, for

cattle breeding, and other agricultural needs (with the exception of field cultivation), the quantity of land to be apportioned shall be determined by the local Soviets in accordance with the needs of the individuals or organizations which ask permission to use the land.

DIVISION VI.

Emigration.

ARTICLE 27. In case the surplus land fund in the given section proves to be insufficient for additional distribution among peasants, the surplus of the population may be transferred to another section where there is sufficient surplus land.

ARTICLE 28. Transfer from one section to another is to take place only after the peasants of the latter section are all distributed.

ARTICLE 29. The emigration from one section to another, as well as the distribution of the inhabitants within the section, must be carried on as follows: at first those who are furthest away from the surplus fund are to emigrate, so that

(a) the land of the surplus fund is used first of all by the peasants of that village or hamlet in the vicinity of which the surplus land fund lies.

Note: If there are several such villages, preference is given to those that tilled the land before.

(b) the second place is given to the peasants of the *Volost* within the boundaries of which the surplus land lies.

(c) the third place is given to the peasants of the county within the boundaries of which the surplus land lies.

(d) finally, if the given system of field cultivation covers several provinces, the peasants of the province within the boundaries of which the surplus land lies receive additional land.

ARTICLE 30. The emigration accordingly runs in the following order: (a) volunteers are the first to emigrate; (b) second, those organizations which suffer most from lack of land; (c) agricultural associations, communities, large families, and small families which have small amounts of land.

ARTICLE 31. The apportionment of land among agriculturists who have to emigrate is to be carried on as follows: in the first place, small families suffering from lack of land; second, large families suffering from lack of land; third, other families suffering from lack of land; fourth, agricultural associations; and, finally, communities.

ARTICLE 32. The transfer of peasants from one section to

another is to be done with consideration, so that the new place shall give the peasant a chance to cultivate land successfully and the climatic conditions shall be analogous to those of his previous domicile. In that case it is necessary to take into consideration the customs and nationality of the emigrants.

ARTICLE 33. The cost of transferring peasants to new places is to be provided by the state.

ARTICLE 34. In connection with the transfer, the state is to help the peasants in the building of homes, roads, drains, and wells, in obtaining agricultural machinery and artificial fertilizers, by creating artificial water systems (when necessary), and by erecting educational centres.

Note: For the purpose of expediting the establishment of agricultural work on a socialistic basis, the state offers to extend to the emigrants every aid necessary for a systematic and scientific management of collective homesteads.

DIVISION VII.

Form of Utilization of Land.

ARTICLE 35. The Russian Federated Soviet Republic, for the purpose of attaining socialism, offers to extend aid (cultural and material) to the general tilling of land, giving preference to the communistic and coöperative homesteads over individual ones.

ARTICLE 36. Lands of coöperative and individual homesteads must, if possible, be in the same location.

DIVISION VIII.

Obtaining Rights to the Use of Land.

ARTICLE 37. Land may be obtained:

- (a) For educational purposes.
 - 1. Social usefulness.
- (b) For agricultural purposes.
 - 1. Personal labor.
- (c) For building purposes.
 - 1. Social buildings.
 - 2. Dwellings.
 - 3. The necessity of conducting a working homestead.
- (d) For the purpose of constructing ways of communication.
 - 1. Public necessity.

DIVISION IX.

The Order in Which the Right to Use the Land May be Obtained.

ARTICLE 38. An application must be filed with the land department of the Soviet power in whose jurisdiction the desired land lies.

ARTICLE 39. The application shows the order in which the permission to use the land is granted. The permission is granted on the basis of the general provisions of this decree.

Note: The application should contain the following information, in addition to the full name and address of the person who desires to use the land: former occupation, the purpose for which land is desired, the inventory on hand, the location of the desired plot and its size.

Note: If the land department of the *Volostnoi* Soviet refuses to grant the permission to use land, the question may be brought (within one week) to the notice of the land department of the county Soviet; if the county Soviet refuses, it may be presented to the land department of the provincial Soviet within two weeks.

Note: The right to use land (sub-surface deposits, waters, forests, and fundamental natural resources) cannot be obtained under any circumstances through purchase, rental, inheritance, or any other private transaction.

DIVISION X.

ARTICLE 40. The right to use the land becomes effective in the following order.

ARTICLE 41. The right to use land for construction purposes becomes effective upon actual occupation of the plot or upon preparations for its occupation, but not later than three months after the receipt of permission from the local Soviet.

Note: By actual preparations is meant the delivery of building materials to the place of destination or the closing of a contract with workers.

ARTICLE 42. The right to use land for agricultural purposes (on the basis of personal labor) becomes effective upon beginning the work at the opening of the next agricultural season.

ARTICLE 43. The right to use the land for field cultivation becomes effective upon the actual beginning of field work (without hired help) at the opening of the agricultural season next after the receipt of a permit from the local Soviet.

Note: Buildings may be erected on plots of land that may be tilled only by special permission of the land department of the Soviet Government.

ARTICLE 44. In case of actual inability to use the plot in the period of time allowed by the land department, the latter may

extend this period if there is valid cause, *i. e.*, the illness of the working hands, trouble brought about by epidemics, etc.

DIVISION XI.

Transfer of Right to Use Given Plots of Land.

ARTICLE 45. The right to use the land is not transferable.

ARTICLE 46. The right to use land may be obtained by anyone on the basis of this decree, and it cannot be transferred from one person to another.

DIVISION XII.

Temporary Cancellation of the Right to Use the Land.

ARTICLE 47. Any land-borrower's right to use the plot of land may be suspended for a certain length of time, without cancelling it entirely.

ARTICLE 48. Any land-borrower may cease utilizing the land at a certain time and still have the right to it (a) if natural calamities (floods, etc.) deprive him of the possibility; (b) if the agriculturist is temporarily ill; (c) if the agriculturist is called to do some government duty; or for other cause valid from the social point of view. He may hold it until such time as conditions are favorable for the utilization of his plot.

Note: The period of such temporary cessation is to be determined in each case by the land department of the local Soviet.

ARTICLE 49. Upon every temporary cessation of the use of the land (as indicated in Article 48), the local Soviet either organizes community help to the agriculturist or calls upon the workers, paid by the state and subject to the general regulations of workers' control, to do the work of the afflicted agriculturist (temporary incapacity, death, etc.), so as to save his property and proceed with production.

DIVISION XIII.

** Cessation of the Right to Use the Land.*

ARTICLE 50. The right to use the land may cease for an entire agricultural unit, or for individual members of the same.

ARTICLE 51. The right of the given individual to use the land may cease for the whole plot or for a part of it.

ARTICLE 52. The right is cancelled (a) if the organization, or the purpose for which it had taken land, is declared void; (b) if units, associations, communities, etc., disintegrate; (c) if the individual finds it impossible to cultivate the field or do other agricultural work, and if at the same time the individual

has other means of subsistence (for instance, a pension paid to the incapacitated); (d) upon the death of the individual, or when his civil rights are cancelled by the court.

ARTICLE 53. The right to use a plot of land ceases (a) in case of a formal refusal to use the plot; (b) in case of obvious unwillingness to use the plot, although no formal refusal has been filed; (c) in case the land is used for illegal purposes (*e. g.*, throwing garbage); (d) in case the land is exploited by illegal means (*e. g.*, hiring land secretly); (e) in case the use of the land by a given individual brings injury to his neighbor (*e. g.*, manufacture of chemicals).

Note: The land-borrower, upon cessation of his right to the use of the land, has the right to demand from the respective land departments of the Soviets a fee for the unused improvements and labor invested in the land, if the given plot did not bring him sufficient profit.

Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee:

SVERDLOV.

Members of the Executive Body:

SPIRIDONOVA, MOURANOV, ZINOVEIV, OUSTINOV, KAMKOV, LANDER, SKOULOV, VOLODARSKY, PETERSON, NATANSON-BROV.

Secretaries of the Central Executive Committees:

AVANESSOV, SMOLIANSKY.

Chairman of the Soviet of People's Commissaries:

V. OULIANOV (LENINE).

People's Commissar of Agriculture:

A. KOLEGUEV.

Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia

THE October revolution of the workmen and peasants began under the common banner of emancipation.

The peasants are being emancipated from the power of the landowners, for there is no longer the landowner's property right in the land—it has been abolished. The soldiers and sailors are being emancipated from the power of autocratic generals, for generals will henceforth be elective and subject to

recall. The workingmen are being emancipated from the whims and arbitrary will of the capitalists, for henceforth there will be established the control of the workers over mills and factories. Everything living and capable of life is being emancipated from the hateful shackles.

There remain only the peoples of Russia, who have suffered and are suffering oppression and arbitrariness, and whose emancipation must immediately be begun, whose liberation must be effected resolutely and definitively.

During the period of Czarism the peoples of Russia were systematically incited against one another. The results of such a policy are known: massacres and pogroms on the one hand, slavery of peoples on the other.

There can be and there must be no return to this disgraceful policy of instigation. Henceforth the policy of a voluntary and honest union of the peoples of Russia must be substituted.

In the period of imperialism, after the February revolution, when the power was transferred to the hands of the Cadet bourgeoisie, the naked policy of instigation gave way to one of cowardly distrust of the peoples of Russia, to a policy of fault-finding and provocation, of "freedom" and "equality" of peoples. The results of such a policy are known: the growth of national enmity, the impairment of mutual trust.

And end must be put to this unworthy policy of falsehood and distrust, of fault-finding and provocation. Henceforth it must be replaced by an open and honest policy which leads to complete mutual trust of the people of Russia. Only as the result of such a trust can there be formed an honest and lasting union of the peoples of Russia. Only as the result of such a union can the workmen and peasants of the peoples of Russia be cemented into one revolutionary force able to resist all attempts on the part of the imperialist-annexationist bourgeoisie.

Starting with these assumptions, the first Congress of Soviets, in June of this year, proclaimed the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination.

The second Congress of Soviets, in October of this year, reaffirmed this inalienable right of the peoples of Russia more decisively and definitively.

The united will of these Congresses, the Council of the People's Commissaries, resolved to base their action regarding the question of the nationalities of Russia upon the following principles:

1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state.
3. The abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges and disabilities.
4. The free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.

The specific decrees which are to follow will be framed immediately upon the formation of a commission for the affairs of nationalities.

In the name of the Russian Republic, People's Commissar for Affairs of Nationalities:

JOSEPH DJUGASHVILI-STALINE

President of the Council of the People's Commissars:
V. OULIANOV (LENIN)

Declaration of the Rights of the Laboring and Exploited People

THE form of the following declaration is explained by the fact that it was prepared for submission to the Constituent Assembly, which, however, broke up without acting upon it.

THE Central Executive Committee proclaims the following basic principles.

I.

The Constituent Assembly resolves:

1. Russia is declared to be a Republic of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. All the power in the centre and in the provinces belongs to these Soviets.
2. The Russian Soviet Republic is formed on the basis of a free union of free nations, as a federation of national Soviet republics.

II.

Taking as its fundamental task the abolition of any exploitation of man by men, the complete elimination of the division of society into classes, the ruthless suppression of exploiters, the

establishment of a socialistic organization of society, and the victory of socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly resolves, further:

1. To effect the socialization of the land, private ownership of land is abolished, and the whole land fund is declared common national property and transferred to the laborers without compensation, on the basis of equalized use of the soil.

All forests, minerals, and waters of state-wide importance, as well as the whole inventory of animate and inanimate objects, all estates and agricultural enterprises, are declared national property.

2. The Soviet law of labor control and the Supreme Board of National Economy are confirmed, with a view to securing the authority of the toilers over the exploiters, as the first step to the complete transfer of all factories, mills, mines, railways, and other means of production and transportation to the ownership of the Workmen's and Peasants' Soviet Republic.

3. The transfer of all banks to the ownership of the Workers' and Peasants' state is confirmed, this being one of the conditions of the emancipation of the laboring masses from the yoke of capital.

4. With a view to the destruction of the parasitic classes of society and the organization of the national economy, universal labor service is established.

5. In the interest of securing all the power for the laboring masses and the elimination of any possibility of the reestablishment of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the toilers, the formation of a socialistic red army of workmen and peasants, and the complete disarmament of the wealthy classes are decreed.

III.

1. Expressing its inflexible determination to wrest humanity from the talons of financial capital and imperialism, which have drenched the earth with blood in this most criminal of wars, the Constituent Assembly subscribes unanimously to the policy of abrogating secret treaties which has been adopted by the Soviet Government, the organization of the widest fraternization with the workmen and peasants of the armies now warring against each other, and the securing, at any cost and by revolutionary measures, of a democratic peace without annexations and indemnities, on the basis of free self-determination of peoples.

2. For these same purposes the Constituent Assembly insists upon a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilization, which built the prosperity of the exploiters among the few chosen nations upon the enslavement of hundreds of millions of the laboring population in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of the People's Commissaries which has proclaimed the complete independence of Finland, which has begun the removal of the troops from Persia, and which has declared the freedom of self-determination of Armenia.

The Constituent Assembly views the Soviet law of the repudiation of the loans contracted by the Government of the Czar, the landowners, and bourgeoisie, as the first blow to international banking, finance, and capital, and expresses its confidence that the Soviet authority will continue to pursue that course until the complete victory of the rising of international labor against the yoke of capital is attained.

IV.

Having been elected on the basis of party lists made up before the October revolution, when the people could not yet rise *en masse* against the exploiters and did not know the strength of the opposition when the latter defends its class privileges, and when the people had not yet practically undertaken the creation of a socialistic society, the Constituent Assembly would deem it radically wrong, even from a formal point of view, to set itself in opposition to the Soviets.

In substance, the Constituent Assembly considers that now, at the moment of the decisive battle of the people with their exploiters, there can be no place for the latter in any of the organs of government. The power must belong wholly and exclusively to the toiling masses and their plenipotentiaries, the Soviets of Workmen's Soldiers', and Peasants' Delegates.

Supporting the Soviet Government and the decrees of the Council of the People's Commissaries, the Constituent Assembly recognizes that its tasks are completed when it has framed a general statement of the fundamental bases of a socialistic reconstruction of society.

At the same time, aiming at the creation of a really free and voluntary and, consequently, a more complete and lasting union of the laboring classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines itself to the establishment of the

fundamental principles of federation of the Soviet Republic of Russia, leaving it to the workmen and peasants of each nation to decide independently, at their own representative Soviet Congress, whether they wish to participate in the Federal Government and in the other Soviet institutions, and on what basis. . . .

Abolition of Classes and Civil Ranks

1. All classes and class divisions of citizens, class privileges and disabilities, class organizations and institutions which have until now existed in Russia, as well as all civil ranks, are abolished.

2. All designations (as merchant, nobleman, burgher, peasant, etc.), titles (as Prince, Count, etc.), and distinctions of civil ranks (Privy, State, and other Councillors), are abolished, and one common designation is established for all the population of Russia—citizen of the Russian Republic.

3. The properties of the noblemen's class institutions are hereby transferred to corresponding Zemstvo self-governing bodies.

4. The properties of merchants' and burghers' associations are hereby placed at the disposal of corresponding municipal bodies.

5. All class institutions, transactions, and archives are hereby transferred to the jurisdiction of corresponding municipal and Zemstvo bodies.

6. All corresponding clauses of the laws which have existed until now are abolished.

7. This decree becomes effective from the day of its publication, and is to be immediately put into effect by the local Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

President of the Central Executive Committee:

YA. SVERDLOV

President of the Council of People's Commissars:

VL. OULIANOV (LENIN)

Director of the Affairs of the Council of People's
Commissars:

BONCH-BRUYEVICH

Secretary to the Council:

N. GORBOUNOV

November 10, 1917

Church and State

1. The church is separated from the state.

2. Within the limits of the Republic, it is prohibited to pass any local laws or regulations which would restrict or limit the freedom of conscience or establish any kind of privileges or advantages on the ground of the religious affiliations of citizens.

3. Every citizen may profess any religion or none at all. Any legal disabilities connected with the profession of any religion or none are abolished.

Note: From all official acts any indication of the religious affiliation or non-affiliation of citizens is to be omitted.

4. The proceedings of state and other public legal institutions are not to be accompanied by any religious customs or ceremonies.

5. The free observance of religious customs is guaranteed in so far as the same do not disturb the public order and are not accompanied by attempts upon the rights of the citizens of the Soviet Republic. The local authorities have the right to take all necessary measures for the preservation, in such cases, of public order and security.

6. No one may decline to perform his civil duties, giving as a reason his religious views. Exemptions from this law, conditioned upon the substitution of one civil duty for another, are permitted by decision of the people's court in each individual case.

7. Religious or judicial oaths are abolished. In necessary cases a solemn promise only is given.

8. Acts of a civil nature are performed exclusively by civil authorities, such as the departments of registration of marriages and births.

9. The school is separated from the church. The teaching of religious doctrines in all state and public, as well as in private, educational institutions in which general subjects are taught, is forbidden. Citizens may teach and study religion privately.

10. All church and religious societies are subject to the general regulations governing private associations and unions, and do not enjoy any privileges or subsidies either from the state or from its local autonomous and self-governing institutions.

11. Compulsory collection of payments and assessments for the benefit of church or religious societies, or as a means of compulsion or punishment of their co-members on the part of these societies, is not allowed.

12. No church or religious society has the right to own property. They have no rights of a juridical person.

13. All the properties of the existing church and religious societies in Russia are declared national property. Buildings and articles specially designated for religious services are, by special decisions of the local or central state authorities, given for the free use of corresponding religious societies.

President of the Council of the People's Commissars:
OULIANOV (LENIN)

Commissars:

PODVOISKY, ALGASSOV, TRUTOVSKY, SHLIKHTER,
PROSHIAN, MENZHINSKY, SHLIAPNIKOV,
PETROVSKY

Director of the Affairs of the Government:
BONCH-BRUYEVICH

Secretary to the Council of the People's Commissars:
GORBOUNOV

Supreme Board of National Economy

1. The Supreme Board of National Economy is established under the Council of the People's Commissaries.

2. The task of the Supreme Board of National Economy is the organization of the national economy and state finances. For that purpose the Supreme Board of National Economy elaborates general standards and a plan for the regulation of the economic life of the country, coördinates and unifies the activity of the central and local regulating institutions (fuel board, metal board, transport board, central supplies committee, etc., and the respective People's Commissaries of commerce and industry, supplies, agriculture, finance, war and navy, etc.) of the All-Russian Board of Workmen's Control, and also of the corresponding activities of factory and trade organizations of the working class.

3. The Supreme Board of National Economy is given the right of confiscation, requisition, sequestration, and compulsory syndication of various branches of industry and commerce, and other measures in the domain of production, distribution, and state finance.

4. All existing institutions for the regulation of the national economy are subordinated to the Supreme Board of National Economy, which is given the right to reform them.

5. The Supreme Board of National Economy is formed (a)·

of the All-Russian Board of Workmen's Control, whose personnel is determined by the decree of November 14, 1917; (b) of representatives of all the People's Commissaries; (c) of learned persons, who are invited and have a consulting voice.

6. The Supreme Board of National Economy is divided into sections and departments (as fuel, metal, demobilization, finance, etc.), and the number and the sphere of activity of these sections and departments are determined by the entire Board.

7. The departments of the Supreme Board of National Economy conduct the work of regulating the separate branches of national economic life, and also prepare the measures of the respective People's Commissaries.

8. The Supreme Board of National Economy forms out of its membership a bureau of fifteen persons, for the coördination of the current work of the sections and departments and the performance of tasks which demand immediate attention.

9. All projects of law and large measures which have reference to the regulation of the national economy in its entirety are submitted to the Council of the People's Commissaries through the Supreme Board of National Economy.

10. The Supreme Board of National Economy unifies and directs the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, which include the local organs of workmen's control, and also the local commissaries of labor, commerce and industry, supplies, etc. In the absence of corresponding economic branches, the Supreme Board of National Economy forms local organs.

All decisions of the Supreme Board of National Economy are binding upon the economic departments of the local Soviets, which constitute the local organs of the Supreme Board of National Economy.

President of the Central Executive Committee:

YA SVERDLOV

President of the Council of People's Commissars:

VL. OULIANOV (LENIN)

People's Commissars:

L. TROTSKY, L. STASHIN, N. AVILOV (N. GLYEBOV)

Director of the Affairs of the Council of People's Commissars:

BONCH-BRUYEVICH

Secretary:

N. GORBOUNOV

Nationalization of Banks

In the interest of the regular organization of the national economy, of the thorough eradication of bank speculation, and the complete emancipation of the workmen, peasants, and the whole laboring population from the exploitation of banking capital, and with a view to the establishment of a single national bank of the Russian Republic which shall serve the real interests of the people and the poorer classes, the Central Executive Committee resolves:

1. The banking business is declared a state monopoly.
2. All existing private joint-stock banks and banking offices are merged in the state bank.
3. The assets and liabilities of the liquidated establishments are taken over by the state bank.
4. The order of the merger of private banks in the state bank is to be determined by a special decree.
5. The temporary administration of the affairs of the private banks is entrusted to the board of the state bank.
6. The interests of the small depositors will be safeguarded.

December 14, 1917.

Regional and Local Boards of National Economy

1. For the purpose of the organization and regulation of the entire economic life of every industrial region, in conformity with general state and local interests, under the regional and local Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, there are organized regional Boards of National Economy, as local institutions for the organization and the regulation of production, directed by the Supreme Board of National Economy and acting under the general control of the respective Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

2. The Regional Board of National Economy is formed (a) of the collegia elected at the joint conferences of producers' trade unions and factory committees (mining, commercial, industrial, transport, etc.), and also at conferences of land committees called by the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies; (b) of representatives of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies and democratic coöperative

societies; (c) of representatives of the technical, administrative, and commercial management of enterprises (numbering not more than one-third of the entire membership of the board). . . .

Representatives of departments participate in the deliberations of the Regional Board of National Economy and have a consulting voice.

3. The Regional Board of National Economy is divided into sections, according to the branches of economic life: (1) state economy and banks, (2) fuel, (3) metal manufacture, (4) textile manufacture, (5) cotton manufacture, (6) wood, (7) mineral substances, (8) animal products, (9) food products, (10) chemical products, (11) construction works, (12) transport, (13) agriculture, (14) supplies and consumption, or other sections which the Regional Board of National Economy, owing to local circumstances, may find necessary.

Each section which takes charge of any branch of production is divided into four main departments: (1) organization: (a) management, (b) financing, and (c) technical organization of enterprises; (2) supply and distribution; (3) labor; (4) statistical. Similar departments of the sections, by meeting jointly, form conferences (1) on organization, (2) on supplies and distribution, (3) on labor questions, (4) on statistics. They maintain permanent business bureaus.

The Board of National Economy forms also other inter-sectional conferences, as on demobilization, etc.

4. The Regional Board of National Economy elects an executive committee which directs all the activity of the Board, its departments, sections, and bureaus.

The Regional Board of National Economy elects a presidium which constitutes the presidium of the executive committee and of the separate committees of the Regional Board of National Economy.

5. The Regional Board of National Economy has jurisdiction over the following matters:

(a) The consideration and solution of questions of principle and those common to the whole region; the unification and direction of the activities of the lower organs of workmen's control in the region, the regulation of their mutual relations, the composition and elaboration of detailed instructions for them regarding various questions of control.

(b) The direction, under the supervision of the Supreme Board of National Economy, of the management of private enterprises which have become the property of the Republic.

(c) The investigation of conflicts not settled by the local organs.

(d) The investigation of all the needs of the region as to fuel, raw material, means of production, labor force, transportation, facilities, supplies, and, in general, articles of prime necessity.

(e) The accounting of raw material, unfinished products, goods, labor forces, implements, and other articles of production.

(f) The taking of measures for the satisfaction of the wants and economic needs of the population, rural economy, etc.

(g) The establishment of regulations and plans for the distribution of general state supplies in the region.

(h) The formation of plans for the distribution of orders among the enterprises.

(i) The regulation of transport in the region.

(j) The establishment of strict supervision over the entire economic life of the region with regard to organization, finances, etc.

(k) The taking of measures for the most complete utilization of the productive forces of the region, in the industries as well as in rural economy.

(l) The establishment of bases of distribution of the labor forces, materials, fuel, means of production, goods, supplies, etc.

(m) The taking of measures for the improvement of the sanitary and hygienic conditions of labor.

6. All regulating institutions of local significance come under the jurisdiction of the respective Regional Boards of National Economy, and all employees, together with the technical and administrative apparatus, are placed at the disposal of the Regional Board of National Economy.

7. All decisions of the Regional Board of National Economy have a compulsory character, and must be carried out by all local institutions and also by the directorates of enterprises.

The decisions of the Regional Board of National Economy may be suspended and vacated only by the Supreme Board of National Economy.

8. The limits of the economic regions are fixed by a congress of Regional Boards of National Economy and, until its meeting, by the Supreme Board of National Economy.

9. All Regional Boards of National Economy must, immediately upon formation, enter into business connection with the Supreme Board of National Economy, obeying its directions upon questions affecting general state interests.

10. The formation of Boards of National Economy of smaller regions (provincial, district, etc.), modelled after the organization of Regional Boards of National Economy, is left to the initiative of provincial Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. The establishment of the sphere of their activity and their general direction and coördination devolve upon the Regional Board of National Economy.

Chairman of the Supreme Board of National Economy:

V. BOLENSKY

(Passed at the meeting of the Supreme Board of National Economy on December 23, 1917.)

The Provincial Soviet Organization

THE scheme of the general statutes of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', Peasant, and Cossack Deputies, as a representative organ, is no less necessary for the obscure places in our provinces than is the scheme of the departments and sub-departments of the Soviets. . . .

The statutes of the Soviets may be divided into sections, as follows: (1) the purpose of the organization of Soviets; (2) the basis of representation; (3) sections of the Soviet; (4) elections of the presidium and executive committee of the Soviet; (5) the functions of the presidium; (6) the executive committee and its functions; (7) general sessions; (8) committees.

1. The purpose of the organization of the Soviet.

The Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', Peasant, and Cossack Deputies is the sovereign state organ of revolutionary democracy, in addition to the organization of governmental authority in the provinces. The Soviet pursues the following objects:

(a) The organization of the large laboring masses of workmen, peasants, soldiers, and Cossacks;

(b) The struggle against counter-revolutionary currents and the strengthening of the Soviet Republic and all liberties gained by the October revolution.

2. The basis and order of representation in the Soviets.

(a) A Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', Peasant, and Cossack Deputies is constituted of one or two representatives each of all workmen's, soldiers', peasant, and Cossack organizations (parties, trade unions, committees, etc.) in the cities, villages, and settlements.

(b) The peasants elect two representatives from each town-

ship to the district Soviet (a township Soviet has one or two representatives from each small town, village, or hamlet).

(c) The Cossacks elect two representatives (or three) from each village to the Regional Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', Peasant, and Cossack Deputies, and one representative each from a *forepost* [small settlement], hamlet, or small town to the village Soviet. (In Cossack territories the peasant representation in the Regional Soviet is proportional, according to the villages).

(d) The workmen and all proletarian laboring masses in cities where the urban proletariat does not exceed 5,000 or 6,000 persons have representation on the following basis: (1) Every enterprise employing 100 persons sends one representative. (2) Enterprises employing from 100 to 200 persons send two representatives; from 200 to 300 persons, three representatives, etc. (3) Enterprises employing less than fifty persons combine, if possible, with other small kindred enterprises and send a common representative to the Soviet. Those unable to combine may send their representatives independently.

(e) The soldiers of a local garrison (Cossacks, sailors) send to the Soviet their representatives on the following principle: each company, squadron, command, etc., elects two representatives to the Soviet; clerks, hospital attendants, horse reserves, and other small units send one representative each.

Addenda to Paragraph 2. (1) Every member newly elected to the Soviet must present a certificate from his constituents, which is examined by the credentials committee; (2) if a member of the Soviet deviates from the instructions of his constituents, then the constituents have the right to recall him and elect another in his place; (3) each section (the workmen's, the soldiers', etc.) of the Soviet has the right to include in its membership experienced and necessary workers by coöptation up to one-fifth of its entire membership. Those added by coöptation have the right of a consulting voice at general sessions of the Soviet in the committees and sections.

3. Sections of the Soviet: (a) a Soviet has four sections—peasant, workmen's, soldiers', and Cossack; (b) each section elects from its membership a presidium consisting of a chairman, two vice-chairmen, and two secretaries, which directs all the business of the section; (c) the representation in the presidium is proportional to the membership of this or that party group.

4. Election of the presidium and executive committee: (a)

the members of the Soviet, in each section, elect a presidium, which is chosen at a general meeting by a universal, direct, equal, and secret vote, in the proportion and number indicated in Paragraph 3 (Sections of the Soviet); (b) the presidia of all sections of the Soviet constitute the general presidium of the Soviet, which elects from its membership a general chairman of all sections, two vice-chairmen, and two secretaries; (c) besides the presidium, the general assembly of the Soviet elects from its membership an executive committee, proportionate to the membership of each party group (not section), so arranged that the membership of the executive committee shall not exceed one-fourth of the entire membership of the Soviet; (d) the members of the presidium form a part of the membership of the Executive Committee on an equal basis with the other members.

5. The functions of the presidium: (a) the presidium is the directing organ of the entire Soviet and decides independently all matters which cannot suffer delay; (b) the presidium meets not less than four times a week; (c) the presidium renders an account of its activity to the executive committee and to the entire Soviet, who have the right to recall it and to replace it at any time or period; (d) the presidium must in its activity abide strictly by the instructions of the executive committee and the general assembly.

6. The executive committee and its functions: (a) the executive committee of the Soviet is an organ formed out of the membership of the Soviet (Paragraph 4). The president, or one of the vice-presidents of the Soviet, is the chairman of the executive committee (Paragraph 4); (b) all current business of the Soviet is decided and carried on by the executive committee, and only matters of particular importance are submitted to the decision of the general assembly of the Soviet; (c) questions considered by the executive committee are passed or rejected by a relative majority of votes; on questions of extraordinary importance a minority report is received, entered upon the records, and reported to the general assembly; (d) questions are decided by an open vote, and only in matters of extraordinary importance, at the request of members of the executive committee, by a secret ballot; (e) a session of the executive committee is considered legal when not less than one-half of its membership is present: (f) members of the executive committee who for one reason or another cannot attend a session of the executive committee, must notify the member of the

executive committee on duty to that effect not later than half an hour before the opening of the session; (g) members of the executive committee who have been absent from three sessions without sufficient reason are deprived of the right to vote at two sessions, and the presidium notifies their constituents regarding the case; (h) the executive committee meets once a week (irrespective of special sessions); (i) special sessions, to consider questions of extraordinary importance, are called by the chairman or the vice-chairmen or by three members of the executive committee; (j) members of the executive committee must be notified of a special session by a summons not later than two hours before the opening of the session; (k) a special session is legal with any number of members present; (l) the sessions of the executive committee may be open or executive; (m) members of the executive committee are on duty in the reception rooms of the Soviet, one from each section, by turns.

7. General sessions: (a) general sessions of the Soviets are called by the presidium whenever necessity arises, but not less than twice a month; (b) general sessions may be regarded as legal when half of the entire membership of the Soviet is present; special sessions, when any number are present; (c) all questions submitted for the consideration of the general assembly must first be passed upon either by the executive committee or by the presidium; (d) a general session may be called also at the request of one-fifth of the membership of the Soviet; (e) admission to the sessions of the Soviet is by ticket only; (f) the sessions may be open or executive by decision of the presidium or of the assembly itself.

8. Committees: (a) committees are elected in each case by the general assembly, by the executive committee, or by the presidium; (b) the membership of a committee is determined by the assembly; (c) the chairman of each committee makes a report about the work of the committee to the general assembly of the Soviet, the executive committee, and the presidium; (d) auditing committees, control committees, etc., for the examination of the Soviet affairs, are selected only by the general assembly of the Soviet; (e) each committee has the right of independent coöptation of learned persons with the privilege of a consulting voice.

IV. [VL.?] OULIANOV [LENINE]

The Rights and Duties of Soviets

1. Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, being local organs, are quite independent in regard to questions of a local character, but always act in accord with the decrees of the central Soviet Government as well as of the larger bodies (district, provincial, and regional Soviets) of which they form a part.

2. Upon the Soviets, as organs of government, devolve the tasks of administration and service in all departments of local life—administrative, economic, financial, and educational.

3. Under administration, the Soviets carry out all decrees and decisions of the central Government, take measures for giving the people the widest information about those decisions, issue obligatory ordinances, make requisitions and confiscations, impose fines, suppress counter-revolutionary organs of the press, make arrests, and dissolve public organizations which incite active opposition to or the overthrow of the Soviet Government.

Note: The Soviets render a report to the central Soviet Government regarding all measures undertaken by them and important local events.

4. The Soviets elect from their number an executive organ which is charged with the duty of carrying out their decisions and the performance of the current work of administration.

Note 1: The Military-Revolutionary Committees, as fighting organs which came into existence during the Revolution, are abolished.

Note 2: As a temporary measure, it is permitted to appoint Commissaries in those provinces and districts where the power of the Soviet is not sufficiently well-established or where the Soviet Government is not exclusively recognized.

5. The Soviets, being organs of government, are allowed credits from state funds for three months upon the presentation of detailed budgets.

Instructions Regarding the Organization of Soviets

At the session of the collegium under the People's Commissary for Internal Affairs, on January 9, 1918, instructions regarding the organization of Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies were voted as follows.

In all Soviets, in place of the old, antiquated government institutions, the following departments or commissariats must first be organized:

1. Administration, in charge of the domestic and foreign re-

lations of the Republic and technically unifying all the other departments.

2. Finance, whose duty is the compilation of the local budget, the collection of local and state taxes, the carrying out of measures for the nationalization of the banks, the administration of the People's Bank, control over the disbursement of national funds, etc.

3. Board of National Economy, which organizes the manufacture of the most necessary products of factory, mill, and home industries, determines the amount of raw materials and fuel, obtains and distributes them, organizes and supplies the rural economy, etc.

4. Land, whose duty it is to make an exact survey of the land, forests, waters, and other resources, and of their distribution for purposes of utilization.

5. Labor, which must organize and unite trade unions, factory and mill committees, peasant associations, etc., and also create insurance organizations of all kinds.

6. Ways of Communication, whose duty is the taking of measures for the nationalization of the railways and steamship enterprises, the direction of this most important branch of the national economy, the building of new roads of local importance, etc.

7. Post, Telegraph, and Telephone, which must aid and develop these state enterprises.

8. Public Education, which looks after the education and instruction of the population in the school and out of school, establishes new schools, kindergartens, universities, libraries, clubs, etc., carries out measures for the nationalization of printing-shops, the publication of necessary periodicals and books and their circulation among the population, etc.

9. Legal, which must liquidate the old courts, organize people's and arbitration courts, take charge of places of detention, reform them, etc.

10. Medico-Sanitary, whose duty is sanitary and hygienic supervision, the organization of medical aid accessible to all, sanitary equipment of urban and rural settlements, etc.

11. Public Realty, whose duty is the regulation of the housing problem, supervision over confiscated and public buildings, the construction of new ones, etc.

Note: Soviets are advised to utilize the organizational apparatus of Zemstvo and municipal institutions, with appropriate changes, when forming the departments.

At the same session was passed the draft of the decree fixing the boundaries of provinces, districts, etc., as follows:

1. Questions of changes of boundaries of provinces, districts, or townships are to be settled entirely by the local Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', Peasants', and Laborers' Deputies.

2. When parts of one province or territory are included in another, the technical questions and misunderstandings which arise are dealt with by mixed commissions of the interested Provincial Soviets or their congress.

3. A similar procedure is followed when the boundaries of a district or township are rectified at the expense of another.

4. Territories, provinces, districts, and townships may also be divided into parts, forming new administrative economic units.

5. Detailed data regarding all such changes are to be reported to the Commissar for Internal Affairs.

President of the Council of People's Commissars:
V. OULIANOV (N. LENIN)

People's Commissars:

PETROVSKY, A. SHLIAPNIKOV, V. TRUTOVSKY,
M. URITZKY

Director of the Affairs of the Council of People's
Commissars:

BONCH-BRUYEVICH

Secretary:

N. GORBOUNOV

The People's Court

THE Council of People's Commissaries resolves:

1. To abolish all existing general legal institutions, such as district courts, courts of appeal, and the governing Senate with all its departments, military and naval courts of all grades, as well as commercial courts, and to replace all these institutions with courts established on the basis of democratic elections.

Regarding further procedure and the continuation of unfinished cases a special decree will be issued.

Beginning October 25 of this year, the passage of time limits is stopped until the issuance of a special decree.

2. To abolish the existing institution of justices of the peace,

and to replace the justices of the peace heretofore elected by indirect vote, by local courts consisting of a permanent local judge and two jurors, the latter of whom are summoned in pairs to each session from special lists of jurors. Local judges are henceforth to be elected on the basis of direct democratic vote, and, until the time of such elections, are to be chosen by regional and township Soviets, or, where there are none such, by district, city, and provincial Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

These same Soviets make up the lists of alternating jurors and determine the time of their presence at the session.

The former justices of the peace are not deprived of the right to be elected as local judges, either temporarily by the Soviets or finally by a democratic election, if they express their consent thereto.

Local judges adjudicate all civil cases to an amount not exceeding 3,000 rubles, and criminal cases if the accused is liable to a penalty of not more than two years' deprivation of freedom. The verdicts and rulings of the local courts are final and no appeal can be taken from them. In cases in which the recovery of over 100 rubles in money or deprivation of freedom for more than seven days is adjudged, a request for review is allowed.

The court of cassation is the district session, and in the capitals the metropolitan session, of local judges.

For the trial of criminal cases at the fronts, local judges are elected by regimental Soviets in the same order, and, where there are none, by the regimental committees.

Regarding procedure in other legal cases, a special decree will be issued.

3. To abolish all existing institutions of investigating magistrates and the procurator's office, as well as the grades of counsellors-at-law and private attorneys.

Until the reformation of the entire system of legal procedure, the preliminary investigation in criminal cases is made by the local judges singly, but their orders of personal detention and indictment must be confirmed by the decision of the entire local court.

As to the functions of prosecutors and counsel for defence, who are allowed even in the stage of preliminary investigation, and in civil cases the functions of solicitors, all citizens of moral integrity, of either sex, who enjoy civil rights, are allowed to perform them.

4. For the transfer and further direction of cases and suits, proceedings of the legal bodies as well as of officials engaged in preliminary investigation and the procurator's office, and also of the associations of counsellors-at-law, the respective local Soviets elect special commissaries, who take charge of the archives and the properties of those bodies.

All the lower and clerical personnel of the abolished institutions are ordered to continue in their positions and to perform, under the general direction of the commissaries, all duties necessary in order to dispose of unfinished cases, and also to give information on appointed days to interested persons about the state of their cases.

5. Local judges try cases in the name of the Russian Republic, and are guided in their rulings and verdicts by the laws of the Governments which have been overthrown only in so far as those laws are not annulled by the revolution, and do not contradict the revolutionary conscience and revolutionary conception of right.

Note: All those laws are considered annulled which contradict the decrees of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies and the Workmen's and Peasants' Government, also the minimum programmes of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor party and the party of Socialist Revolutionaries.

6. In all civil as well as criminal cases the parties may resort to the arbitration court. The organization of the arbitration court will be determined by a special decree.

7. The right of pardon and restoration of rights of persons convicted in criminal cases belongs henceforth to the legal authorities.

8. For the struggle against the counter-revolutionary forces by means of measures for the defence of the revolution and its accomplishments, and also for the trial of proceedings against profiteering, speculation, sabotage, and other misdeeds of merchants, manufacturers, officials, and other persons, workmen's and peasants' revolutionary tribunals are established, consisting of a chairman and six jurors, serving in turn, elected by provincial or city Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

For the conduct of the preliminary investigation in such cases, special investigating commissions are formed under the above Soviets.

All existing investigating commissions are abolished, and

their cases and proceedings are transferred to the newly-formed investigating commissions.

President of the Council of People's Commissars:
V. OULIANOV (LENIN)

Commissars:

A. SHLIKHTER, L. TROTZKY, A. SHLIAPNIKOV,
I. DJUGASHVILI (STALIN), N. AVILOV
(N. GLYBOV), P. STUCHKA

November 24, 1917

Instructions to the Revolutionary Tribunal

THE Revolutionary Tribunal is guided by the following instructions:

1. The Revolutionary Tribunal has jurisdiction in cases of persons (a) who organize uprisings against the authority of the Workmen's and Peasants' Government, actively oppose the latter or do not obey it, or call upon other persons to oppose or disobey it; (b) who utilize their positions in the state or public service to disturb or hamper the regular progress of work in the institution or enterprise in which they are or have been serving (sabotage, concealing or destroying documents or property, etc.); (c) who stop or reduce production of articles of general use without actual necessity for so doing; (d) who violate the decrees, orders, binding ordinances, and other published acts of the organs of the Workmen's and Peasants' Government, if such acts stipulate a trial by the Revolutionary Tribunal for their violation; (e) who, taking advantage of their social or administrative position, misuse the authority given them by the revolutionary people. Crimes against the people committed by means of the press are under the jurisdiction of a specially instituted Revolutionary Tribunal.

2. The Revolutionary Tribunal for offences indicated in Article 1 imposes upon the guilty the following penalties: (1) fine, (2) deprivation of freedom, (3) exile from the capitals, from particular localities, or from the territory of the Russian Republic, (4) public censure, (5) declaring the offender a public enemy, (6) deprivation of all or some political rights, (7) sequestration or confiscation, partial or general, of property, (8) sentence of compulsory public work.

The Revolutionary Tribunal fixes the penalty, being guided by

the circumstances of the case and the dictates of the revolutionary conscience.

3. (a) The Revolutionary Tribunal is elected by the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies and consists of one permanent chairman, two permanent substitutes, one permanent secretary and two substitutes, and forty jurors. All persons, except the jurors, are elected for three months and may be recalled by the Soviets before the expiration of the term.

(b) The jurors are selected for one month from a general list of jurors by the Executive Committees of the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies by drawing lots, and lists of jurors numbering six, and one or two in addition, are made up for each session.

(c) The session of each successive jury of the Revolutionary Tribunal lasts not longer than one week.

(d) A stenographic record is kept of the entire proceedings of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(e) The grounds for instituting proceedings are: reports of legal and administrative institutions and officials, public, trade, and party organizations, and private persons.

(f) For the conduct of the preliminary investigation in such cases an investigating commission is created under the Revolutionary Tribunal, consisting of six members elected by the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

(g) Upon receiving information or complaint, the investigating commission examines it and within forty-eight hours either orders the dismissal of the case, if it does not find that a crime has been committed, or transfer it to the proper jurisdiction, or brings it up for trial at the session of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(h) The orders of the investigating commission about arrests, searches, abstracts of papers, and releases of detained persons are valid if issued jointly by three members. In cases which do not permit of delay such orders may be issued by any member of the investigating commission singly, on the condition that within twelve hours the measure shall be approved by the investigating commission.

(i) The order of the investigating commission is carried out by the Red Guard, the militia, the troops, and the executive organs of the Republic.

(j) Complaints against the decisions of the investigating commission are submitted to the Revolutionary Tribunal through

its president and are considered at executive sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

(k) The investigating commission has the right (1) to demand of all departments and officials, as well as of all local self-governing bodies, legal institutions and authorities, public notaries, social and trade organizations, commercial and industrial enterprises, and governmental, public, and private credit institutions, the delivery of necessary documents and information, and of unfinished cases; (2) to examine, through its members or special representatives, the transactions of all above-enumerated institutions and officials in order to secure necessary information.

4. The sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal are public.

5. The verdicts of the Revolutionary Tribunal are rendered by a majority of votes of the members of the Tribunal.

6. The legal investigation is made with the participation of the prosecution and defence.

7. (a) Citizens of either sex who enjoy political rights are admitted at the will of the parties as prosecutors and counsel for the defence, with the right to participate in the case.

(b) Under the Revolutionary tribunals a collegium of persons is created who devote themselves to the service of the law, in the form of public prosecution as well as of public defence.

(c) The above-mentioned collegium is formed by the free registration of all persons who desire to render aid to revolutionary justice, and who present recommendations from the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies.

8. The Revolutionary Tribunal may invite for each case a public prosecutor from the membership of the above-named collegium.

9. If the accused does not for some reason use his right to invite counsel for defence, the Revolutionary Tribunal, at his request, appoints a member of the collegium for his defence.

10. Besides the above-mentioned prosecutors and defence, one prosecutor and one counsel for defence, drawn from the public present at the session, may take part in the court's proceedings.

11. The verdicts of the Revolutionary Tribunal are final. In case of violation of the form of procedure established by these instructions, or the discovery of indications of obvious injustice in the verdict, the People's Commissar of Justice has the right to address to the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies a request to order a second and last trial of the case.

12. The maintenance of the Revolutionary Tribunal is charged to the account of the state. The amount of compensation and the daily fees are fixed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. The jurors receive the difference between the daily fees and their daily earnings, if the latter are less than the daily fees; at the same time the jurors may not be deprived of their positions during the session.

People's Commissar of Justice:

I. Z. STEINBERG

December 19, 1917

The Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press

1. Under the Revolutionary Tribunal is created a Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press. This Tribunal will have jurisdiction of crimes and offences against the people committed by means of the press.

2. Crimes and offences by means of the press are the publication and circulation of any false or perverted reports and information about events of public life, in so far as they constitute an attempt upon the rights and interests of the revolutionary people.

3. The Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press consists of three members, elected for a period not longer than three months by the Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. These members are charged with the conduct of the preliminary investigation as well as the trial of the case.

4. The following serve as grounds for instituting proceedings: reports of legal or administrative institutions, public organizations, or private persons.

5. The prosecution and defence are conducted on the principles laid down in the instructions to the general Revolutionary Tribunal.

6. The sessions of the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press are public.

7. The decisions of the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press are final and are not subject to appeal.

8. The Revolutionary Tribunal imposes the following penalties: (1) fine, (2) expression of public censure, which the convicted organ of the press brings to the general knowledge in a way indicated by the Tribunal, (3) the publication in a prominent place or in a special edition of a denial of the false report, (4) temporary or permanent suppression of the publication or

its exclusion from circulation, (5) confiscation to national ownership of the printing-shop or property of the organ of the press if it belongs to the convicted parties.

9. The trial of an organ of the press by the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press does not absolve the guilty persons from general criminal responsibility.

People's Commissar of Justice:

I. Z. STEINBERG

December 18, 1917

To the Soviet of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, a Request for the Immediate Election of Com- missaries of Justice, Their Duties and Rights

BY the decree of the Council of the People's Commissaries [November 24, 1917] the general legal institutions and justices' courts, the procurator's office, the institutions of investigating magistrates, counsellors-at-law, and private attorneys, are abolished. Until the creation of permanent legal institutions, elect immediately Commissaries of Justice.

The duties of the elected Commissaries are the safe-keeping of archives and the property of the courts, the direction of unfinished cases, and the giving of information to interested persons. In view of the approach of the time for rendering semi-annual and annual financial reports for 1917, the elected Commissaries are requested to take measures for the immediate preparation and delivery of the above-mentioned reports in the established form and order. The publications of the official "Gazette of the Provisional Workmen's and Peasants' Government" are to serve as a guide to the local authorities.

Report the beginning of the activity of the new courts, their structure, the names of the Commissaries of Justice. Report the tentative budgets of the legal department for 1918.

The credits of the legal department which were not used locally in 1917, you may use by order of the Soviets.

Instructions for the Revolutionary Tribunal of the Press, and for general courts, criminal and civil, are being prepared.

People's Commissar of Justice:

I. Z. STEINBERG

Marriage, Children, and Registration of Civil Status

THE Russian Republic henceforth recognizes civil marriage only.

Civil marriage is performed on the basis of the following rules:

1. Persons who wish to contract marriage declare [their intention] orally or by a written statement to the department of registration of marriages and births at the city hall (regional, district, township, Zemstvo institutions), according to the place of their residence.

Note: Church marriage is a private affair of those contracting it, while civil marriage is obligatory.

2. Declarations of intention to contract marriage are not accepted (a) from persons of the male sex younger than eighteen years, and of the female sex, sixteen years of age; in Transcaucasia the native inhabitants may enter into marriage upon attaining the age of sixteen for the groom and thirteen for the bride; (b) from relatives in the direct line, full and half-brothers and sisters; consanguinity is recognized also between a child born out of wedlock and his descendants on one side and relatives on the other; (c) from married persons, and (d) from insane.

3. Those wishing to contract marriage appear at the department of registration of marriages and sign a statement concerning the absence of the obstacles to contracting marriage enumerated in Article 2 of this decree, and also a statement that they contract marriage voluntarily.

Those guilty of deliberately making false statements about the absence of the obstacles enumerated in Article 2 are criminally prosecuted for false statements and the marriage is declared invalid.

4. Upon the signing of the above-mentioned statement, the director of the department of registration of marriages records the act of marriage in the book of marriage registries and then declares the marriage to have become legally effective.

When contracting marriage the parties are allowed to decide freely whether they will henceforth be called by the surname of the husband or wife or by a combined surname.

As proof of the act of marriage, the contracting parties immediately receive a copy of the certificate of their marriage. . . .

5. Complaints against the refusal to perform marriage or incorrect registration are lodged, without limitation of time, with the local judge in the locality where the department of registration of marriage is; the ruling of the local judge on such complaint may be appealed in the usual way.

6. In case the former books of registration of marriages have been destroyed, or lost in some other way, or if for some other cause married persons cannot obtain a certificate of their marriage, those persons are given a right to submit a declaration to the respective department of registration of marriages, according to the place of residence of both parties or one of them, to the effect that they have been in the state of wedlock since such and such time. Such declaration is attested, in addition to the statement stipulated by Article 3, by a further statement of the parties that the book of registration has really been lost or that for some other sufficient cause they cannot obtain a copy of the certificate.

Registration of Births.

7. The registration of the birth of a child is made by the same department of registration of marriages and births in the place of residence of the mother, and a special entry of each birth is made in the book of registration of births. . . .

8. The birth of a child must be reported to the department either by his parents or one of them, or by the persons in whose care, because of the death of his parents, the child remained, with an indication of the name and surname adopted for the child and the presentation of two witnesses to attest the fact of birth.

9. The books of registration of marriages as well as the books of registration of births are kept in two copies, and one copy is sent at the end of the year to the proper court for preservation.

10. Children born out of wedlock are on an equality with those born in wedlock with regard to the rights and duties of parents towards children, and likewise of children towards parents.

The persons who make a declaration and give a signed statement to that effect are registered as the father and mother of the child.

Those guilty of deliberately making false statements regarding the above are criminally prosecuted for false testimony and the registration is declared invalid.

In case the father of a child born out of wedlock does not make such a declaration, the mother of the child or the guardian or the child itself has the right to prove fatherhood by legal means.

Registration of Deaths.

11. The record of the death of a person is made in the place where the death occurred by the department which has charge of the registration of marriages and births, by entry in a special book for registration of deaths. . . .

12. The death of a person must be reported to the department by the legal or administrative authorities or persons in whose care the deceased was.

13. Institutions in charge of cemeteries are henceforth forbidden to place obstacles in the way of the burial in cemetery grounds in accordance with the ritual of civil funerals.

14. All religious and administrative institutions which hitherto have had charge of the registration of marriages, births, and deaths according to the customs of any religious sect, are ordered to transfer immediately all the registration books to the respective municipal, district, rural, or Zemstvo administrations.

President of the Council of People's Commissars:
V. OULIANOV (LENIN)

President of the Central Executive Committee of
the Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and
Peasants' Deputies:

YA. SVERDLOV

Director of the Affairs of the Council of People's
Commissars:

BONCH-BRUYEVICH

Secretary:

N. GORBOUNOV

December 18, 1917.

Divorce

1. Marriage is annulled by the petition of both parties or even of one of them.

2. The above petition is submitted, according to the rules of local jurisdiction, to the local court.

Note: A declaration of annulment of marriage by mutual consent may be filed directly with the department of registration of marriages in which a record of that marriage is kept, which

department makes an entry of the annulment of the marriage in the record and issues a certificate.

3. On the day appointed for the examination of the petition for the annulment of marriage, the local judge summons both parties or their solicitors.

4. If the residence of the party who is to be summoned is unknown, the petitioner is allowed to file the petition for annulment of marriage in the place of residence of the absent party last known to the petitioner, or in the place of residence of the petitioner, stating to the court, however, the last known place of residence of the defendant.

5. If the place of residence of the party who is to be summoned is unknown, then the day for the trial of the case is set not earlier than the expiration of two months from the date of the publication of a notice of summons in the local Government gazette, and the summons is sent to the address of the last known place of residence of the defendant given by the petitioner.

6. Having convinced himself that the petition for the annulment of the marriage really comes from both parties or from one of them, the judge personally and singly renders the decision of the annulment of the marriage and issues a certificate thereof to the parties. At the same time, the judge transmits a copy of his decision to the department of registration of marriages where the annulled marriage was performed and where the book containing a record of the marriage is kept.

7. When annulling a marriage by mutual consent, the parties are obliged to state in their petition what surnames the divorced parties and their children are to bear in the future. But when dissolving the marriage by the petition of one of the parties, and in the absence of an understanding about this matter between the parties, the divorced parties preserve their own surnames, and the surname of the children is determined by the judge, and in case of disagreement of the parties, by the local court.

8. In case the parties are agreed on the matter, the judge, simultaneously with the decision of annulment of the marriage, determines with which of the parents the minor children begotten of the marriage shall live, and which of the parents must bear the expense of maintenance and education of the children, and to what extent and also whether and to what extent the husband is obliged to furnish food and maintenance to his divorced wife.

9. But if no understanding shall be reached, then the par-

ticipation of the husband in furnishing his divorced wife with food and maintenance when she has no means of her own or has insufficient means and is unable to work, as well as the question with whom the children are to live, is decided by a regular civil suit in the local court, irrespective of the amount of the suit. The judge, having rendered the decision annulling the marriage, determines temporarily, until the settlement of the dispute, the fate of the children, and also rules on the question of the temporary maintenance of the children and the wife, if she is in need of it.

10. Suits for adjudging marriages illegal or invalid belong henceforth to the jurisdiction of the local court.

11. The operation of this law extends to all citizens of the Russian Republic irrespective of their adherence to this or that religious sect.

12. All suits for annulment of marriage which are now tried in ecclesiastical consistories of the Greek-Catholic and other denominations, in the governing synod and all other institutions of Christian and non-Christian religions, and by officials in charge of ecclesiastical affairs of all denominations, and in which no decisions have been rendered or the decisions already rendered have not become legally effective, are declared by reason of this law null and void, and are subject to immediate transfer to the local district courts for safe-keeping, with all archives in the possession of the above-mentioned institutions and persons having jurisdiction in divorce suits. The parties are given the right to file a new petition for the annulment of the marriage according to this decree, without awaiting the dismissal of the first suit, and a new summons of absent parties (Paragraphs 4 and 5) is not obligatory if such a summons was published in the former order.

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the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants'
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December 18, 1917

Eight-Hour Law

1. This law applies to all establishments and industries irrespective of their size or to whom they belong, and to all persons employed in hired labor.

2. The working time, or the number of working hours in a day, is considered to be the time during which, according to the contract of employment (Articles 48, 60, 96, 98, and 103 of the Industrial Labor law), the workman is obliged to be in the industrial establishment at the disposal of its superintendent for the performance of the work.

Note 1. In underground work the time taken by the descent into the mine and ascent to the surface is considered working time.

Note 2. The working time of workmen sent to perform any kind of labor beyond the boundaries of an establishment is determined by special agreement with the workmen.

3. The working time fixed by the rules governing the internal organization of the establishment (Clause 1, Article 103 of the Industrial Labor law) must not exceed eight working hours in a day and forty-eight hours in a week, including therein also the time employed in cleaning the engine and in putting the premises in order.

On Christmas eve (December 24) and on the Pentecost holiday (Whitsunday) work is stopped at eleven o'clock in the morning.

4. Not later than six hours after the beginning of work a free interval for rest and eating must be designated. The interval must not be shorter than one hour.

Free recesses during work are those which are fixed by the rules of the internal organization; during such recesses the workman is free to dispose of his time and to leave the boundaries of the establishment.

During the free recesses in working time the engines, lathes, and benches must be stopped; exceptions from this rule are allowed only for such over-time work as is performed in accordance with Articles 18-22 of this law, as well as for engines and motors which are working for ventilation, water-supply, lighting, etc.; moreover, work may not be stopped in those manufacturies in which stoppage is impossible for technical reasons (such as unfinished casting or unfinished polishing).

Note 1. Establishments whose work is recognized by law or by the main chamber of labor as continuous and which is performed in three shifts a day, do not observe the rules regarding recesses, but are obliged to give the workman the right to take food during his work.

Note 2. If a workman, owing to the conditions of his work, cannot absent himself from the place of work to take food, then a room or place is to be provided for him for that purpose. The setting aside of a special room for the above purpose is obligatory for those workmen who, when working, come into contact with materials recognized by the rulings of the main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ taking its place) as injurious to the health of the workmen (lead, mercury, etc.).

5. The general duration of all recesses during twenty-four hours shall not exceed two hours.

6. Night time is considered the time between nine o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning.

7. In the night time it is forbidden to utilize the labor of workers of the female sex, or of workers of the male sex under sixteen years of age.

8. For enterprises working two shifts of workmen, the night time is considered from nine o'clock in the evening until five o'clock in the morning, while the free recesses (Article 4) may be reduced to half an hour for each shift.

9. In those cases where, by request of the workers (for instance, in brick works) or on account of climatic conditions, it is desired to make the midday recess more lengthy, the main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ taking its place) may permit a corresponding departure from the rules in Articles 4, 5, 6, and 8 of this statute.

10. When hiring minors under eighteen years of age the following rules in addition to the above are applied: (a) minors under fourteen years are not permitted to work for hire; (b) the working time of minors under eighteen may not be longer than six hours a day.

Note: Beginning January 1, 1919, all persons who have not reached fifteen years are not permitted to work for hire, and beginning January 1, 1920, those who have not reached twenty years of age.

11. In the table of holidays on which work is stopped (Clause 2, Article 103 of Industrial Labor law) are included all Sundays and the following holidays: January 1, January 6, February 27, March 25, May 1, August 15, September 14, December 25 and 26, Friday and Saturday of Passion week, Monday and Tuesday of Easter week, Ascension Day, and the second day of Pentecost.

Note 1. For non-Christians it is permitted to include other holidays instead of Sundays, according to the precepts of their religion; of the remaining holidays mentioned in this article only those are obligatory for them which are not indicated in the following note.

Note 2. By the consent of the majority of workmen of an establishment or industry, or a part of them, the holidays of January 1 and 6, August 15, September 14, December 26, Saturday of Passion week, and Easter Monday may be replaced by other free days.

12. In one-shift day work the least duration of the Sunday and holiday rest given each workman is fixed at forty-two hours. In two-shift work with two complements of workmen, and in three-shift work with three complements of workmen, the least duration of a Sunday and holiday rest for each workman is fixed by agreement with the workmen's organizations.

13. By mutual agreement of the superintendent of the establishment or industry with the people employed by it, the latter may, as a departure from the rules about holidays indicated in Article 11, be engaged in work on a holiday instead of on a week-day. Such an understanding must immediately be reported to the proper officials who look after the execution of this law.

14. The main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ taking its place) is given the right to issue regulations permitting, to the extent of real necessity, departures from the rules set forth in Articles 3, 4, 5, and 8 for those establishments which, by the nature of their production for the satisfaction of public needs, must perform the work in the night time or must work irregularly at different seasons of the year (for instance, work for lighting and water supply of cities).

15. In manufactories and works in which the workmen are subjected to the operation of particularly unfavorable conditions, or to danger of occupational poisoning (such as work in an extraordinarily high temperature, in mercury and bleaching factories, etc.), the working time indicated in Articles 3-5 and 8 is subject to further reduction. A list of such works and manufactories, with the indication of the duration of the working time permissible in each line of work, as well as other conditions of the work, is to be compiled by the main board of factory and mining industries (or the organ which takes its place).

16. Women and youths of either sex under eighteen years of age are not permitted to work underground.

17. A departure from the rules stated in Articles 3-5 and 8-12 is permitted by agreement with the workmen and with the approval of the workmen's organizations with regard to workmen engaged in auxiliary work, such as repairs, care of boilers, motors, lathes, factory heating, water supply, lighting of the factory buildings, guard and fire duty, and in general such work without whose preliminary performance the industrial

enterprise can not be put in operation at the fixed time and which must of necessity be performed after the stoppage of the work.

18. The work which is performed by the workman at a time when, according to the tables of working time, he is not supposed to work is considered over-time. Over-time work is permitted only when conditions stated in Articles 19-23 of this statute are observed and when it is paid for at a double rate.

19. Persons of the female sex, and persons of the male sex who have not reached eighteen years of age, are not permitted to work over-time.

20. Workmen of the male sex older than eighteen years may work over-time with the permission of the workmen's organization only in the following cases: (a) when over-time work is necessary in order to finish in time the work begun, which because of unforeseen and accidental delay could not by the mechanical conditions of production be finished in the normal working time (according to the rules of the establishment), and when the stoppage of that work at the set time might cause danger or injury to materials and the mechanism (work with chemical processes, casting, etc., may be considered of that nature); (b) for the performance of work necessary to avert danger to life or property, or for the removal of accidental causes which have disturbed the technical conditions necessary for the regular water supply, lighting, sanitation, and urgent public communication; (c) when working on necessary repairs in case of sudden injury to boilers, motors, lathes, and, in general, unforeseen derangement of mechanisms, apparatus, or structures (buildings, dams, etc.) which cause the stoppage of the work of the entire establishment or any of its branches; (d) when performing temporary work in any branch of the establishment in cases where because of fire, break-down, or unforeseen circumstances, the work of one or other branch of the establishment was stopped for some time or entirely and when this work is necessary for the full operation of the other branches of the establishment.

21. In such a case as is mentioned in the last paragraph of Article 20 it is necessary to obtain from the commissar of labor or labor inspector a special permit for over-time work; and in the application for such permit the daily duration of such work and the time during which it will be performed must be indicated. About over-time work specified in Clauses (b) and (c) of Article 20, ordinary notice is given.

22. All over-time work is recorded in the workmen's account books by special entry, with an indication of the pay due for it; in addition, a special over-time account has to be kept in the office books for each workman separately.

23. Over-time work under conditions stated in Articles 19-22 is allowed on not more than fifty days in a year for each separate establishment, and each day of over-time work in a branch is counted even if on that day only one workman did over-time work in that branch.

24. The duration of over-time work of each individual workman must in no case exceed four hours for two days in succession.

25. For some time, until the end of military operations, in the establishments working for defence, the rules limiting the duration of over-time work (Articles 19-24) and those about recesses during the work (Articles 4-6) may be suspended by agreement with the workmen and the workmen's organizations.

26. This law is to be put into operation by telegraph and becomes effective immediately. For its violation offenders are liable to imprisonment for a period not longer than one year.

In the name of the Russian Republic,

For the Commissar of Labor:

N. LARIN

October 29, 1917

Insurance Law

1. The Insurance Council is instituted under the People's Commissary of Labor for the supervision of all matters relating to the insurance of workmen.

2. The Insurance Council consists of twenty-four members from the insured, four from the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, two each from the All-Russian Central Council of factory and mill committees and agricultural laborers' committees, three from the People's Commissariat of Labor, one from the People's Commissariat of Justice, eight from employers, and one each from Zemstvo and municipal self-governments, from physicians, and from lawyers.

3. The Insurance Council elects from its number a chairman, two vice-chairmen, and two secretaries.

4. The members of the Council from the People's Commis-

sariats are appointed by order of the respective People's Commissaries.

5. The period of incumbency of the elected members of the Council is fixed at one year.

6. The members of the Council from Zemstvo and municipal self-governments, and from physicians and lawyers, are elected, respectively, by the main head committees of the All-Russian Zemstvo Union and Union of Municipalities by the directorate of the Society of Russian Physicians in memory of N. I. Pirogov, and by the All-Russian Association of Lawyers.

7. The members of the Council from insurance funds are elected in accordance with the rules established by the all-Russian conventions of members of the funds assembled in accordance with Article 27 of this law.

8. The members of the Council from the All-Russian Trades Council and All-Russian Central Council of factory and mill committees and agricultural laborers' committees are elected by the respective all-Russian conventions.

9. The members of the Council from employers are elected by the central employers' associations by their mutual consent.

10. Persons of either sex may be elected as members of the Council from insurance funds, trade unions, factory, mill, and agricultural laborers' committees, and also from employers, even if they are not members of insurance funds, trade union, factory, mill, or agricultural laborers' committees, or employers' associations.

11. As substitutes for the members of the Council there are elected twelve from the insured, two from the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, one each from the All-Russian Central Council of the factory, mill, and agricultural laborers' committees, four from employers, and one each from municipal and Zemstvo self-governments, physicians, and lawyers, according to Articles 6, 7, 8, and 9.

The substitution of members is made in the order of the majority of votes received in the election, and, in case of an equal number of votes, by drawing lots. The substitutes may participate in the sessions of the Council even if the membership is complete, but in the latter case only with the right of a consulting voice.

12. The members of the Council by election and their substitutes, upon the expiration of the time of their incumbency, continue to perform their duties until new elections. Retiring members may be reelected.

13. Members of the Council receive, for their participation in the labors of the Council, remuneration from the funds of the state treasury, the amount of which is fixed by the statutes of the Council. The amount of remuneration of the substitutes is fixed by the instructions of the Council.

14. The absence of members of the Council from the insurance funds, trade unions, factory, mill, and agricultural laborers' committees, from work or office at the time when they are engaged in the performance of the duties devolving upon them as members of the Council, does not give the employer the right to impose upon them fines for absence from work (Industrial Labor law, edition of 1913, articles 104 and 106) or to demand the cancellation of the employment contract.

15. To the sessions of the Council may be invited persons from whom it may be expected that useful information will be obtained about the matter under discussion. When considering matters which concern the jurisdiction of the people's commissariats which have no representatives on the Council, such persons are invited by arrangement with the respective People's Commissar. Invited persons enjoy the right of a consulting voice.

16. The direction of the business of the Insurance Council devolves upon the bureau of the Council, which is elected by the general assembly of the Council. The sessions of the Council are called by the bureau whenever necessary. Matters are submitted for the consideration of the Council in the order established by the bureau of the Council. Members of the Council have the right to submit through the bureau, for consideration by the Council, questions which relate to matters in its jurisdiction.

17. The Insurance Council has jurisdiction in the following cases:

(a) the issuance, within the limits of the laws in force, of regulations and instructions concerning all kinds of workmen's insurance, as well as the issuance of rules establishing the order of operation of local insurance institutions in charge of these matters;

(b) the examination of objections which may arise from the application by the local insurance institutions of the laws governing questions of workmen's insurance;

(c) the annulment of the decisions of insurance boards against which, by law, appeals may be taken to the Council;

(d) the consideration of complaints against the decisions of the insurance boards submitted to the Insurance Council;

(e) the fixing of the amount of remuneration of members of the insurance boards for participation in the labors of these boards;

(f) the issuance of rules governing the accounting of insurance funds and other insurance institutions;

(g) the establishment of a general rule for the application of the insurance laws to persons who work in coöperative societies, artisans, those engaged in home industries, and poor peasants who work independently without employing hired labor;

(h) consideration of legislative proposals regarding matters of workmen's insurance, instructions to sections, and the general assembly of the Council;

(i) proposals regarding the inspection of local institutions in charge of insurance, and also the inspection of insurance funds and other insurance institutions;

(j) the consideration of questions having relation to matters within the jurisdiction of the Council and submitted by the People's Commissariat of Labor, as well as by members of the Council through the bureau of the Council.

The Insurance Council has jurisdiction in the following cases in particular:

I. Regarding workmen's insurance against sickness:

(a) the establishment of the form and order of furnishing proper information by employers, as well as the keeping of books and records containing this information, and the order of their submission for examination;

• (b) the fixing of time limits for the establishment of hospital funds;

(c) the issuance of regulations governing the equipment and maintenance of medical institutions for members of hospital funds, as well as the extent of medical aid in all its forms;

(d) the establishment of the order and general basis of rendering medical aid to members of hospital funds;

(e) the establishment of the forms of medical reports of institutions which treat members of hospital funds;

(f) the establishment of the form of annual reports about the employment of hospital funds.

II. Regarding workmen's insurance against accidents:

(a) the establishment of the form of certificate attesting the circumstances under which the accident occurred;

(b) the establishment of time limits for the issuance to pensioners of certificates necessary for receiving a pension;

(c) the establishment of the form of pension books and rules governing their issuance;

(d) the establishment of regulations and the time limit for the delivery of information about the nature of an enterprise and the number of persons employed in it;

(e) the approval of tables for reckoning the capitalized cost of pensions;

(f) the consideration of the basis for calculating the proportions of the insurance contributions of employers;

(g) the establishment and determination of the classes of dangerous occupations;

(h) the selection of the forms of statistical reports about accidents.

III. Regarding workmen's insurance against unemployment:

(a) the fixing of the amount of the contribution of employers to the unemployment fund in its ratio to wages;

(b) the establishment of rules of deposit, keeping, and disbursement of the all-Russian unemployment fund;

(c) the establishment of the form of the order on which employers shall furnish necessary information;

(d) the examination of complaints against the decisions of insurance boards.

19. The Insurance Council transacts its business in general sessions and in separate sections of the Council.

20. Separate sections are established by the Council for the consideration of questions and business (a) of insurance against sickness, (b) accident insurance, (c) unemployment insurance, (d) old age insurance, etc.

21. The personnel of the sections, the order of their election, and the apportionment of business among the sections is determined by the Council in special instructions for each section.

22. The decisions of the Council are final. The People's Commissar of Labor is given the right of vetoing the decisions of the Council.

23. The general assembly of the Council may order the formation of committees to carry out special missions of the Council or sections, and persons who are not members of the Council may be included in those committees.

24. When the inspection is being made, as stipulated in Clause (i) of Article 17 of this law, institutions and persons are obliged to produce all books, accounts, and records which have reference to the object of the inspection.

25. The rules of procedure in the general assembly, sections, and committees, as well as in the bureau of the Council, are determined by instructions formulated by the Council.

26. The decisions of the Council are published in a special collection which is sent free to local insurance institutions and insurance organizations, as well as governmental and public institutions and organizations, at the discretion of the bureau of the Council. Decisions having a binding character are published for general information in the central organ of the Government.

27. For the consideration of the most important measures of a general character which relate to workmen's insurance, all-Russian and regional conventions of insured are called annually.

Note: The order of elections to the conventions is determined by local workmen's insurance organizations.

28. The business of the Insurance Council is to be transacted by the department of social insurance of the People's Commissariat of Labor, under the direction of the bureau of the Council.

29. Until the election of the members of the Insurance Council from members of insurance funds in the way provided by Article 7 of this law, the above members of the Council are elected at the Petrograd Workmen's Insurance Conference on the basis of one delegate to 1,000 workmen.

The members of the Insurance Council from employers, until their election in the way indicated in Article 9 of this law, are elected by the Petrograd Association of Manufacturers.

Complaints against election errors are lodged with the People's Commissariat of Labor.

People's Commissar of Labor,
A. SHLIAPNIKOV

Director of the Department of Social Insurance,
A. VINOKUROV

Secretary of the Department,
A. PODERIN

November 29, 1917

The Administration of National Undertakings

PART I.

1. The Central Administration of Nationalized Undertakings, of whatever branch of industry, assigns for each large nationalized undertaking technical and administrative directors, in whose hands are placed the actual administration and direction of the entire activity of the undertaking. They are responsible to the Central Administration and the Commissar appointed by it.

2. The technical director appoints technical employees and gives all orders regarding the technical administration of the undertaking. The factory committee may, however, complain regarding these appointments and orders to the Commissar of the Central Administration, and then to the Central Administration itself; but only the Commissar and Central Administration may stop the appointments and order of the technical director.

3. In connection with the Administrative Director there is an Economic Administrative Council, consisting of delegates from laborers, employees, and engineers of the undertaking. The Council examines the estimates of the undertaking, the plan of its works, the rules of internal distribution, complaints, the material and moral conditions of the work and life of the workmen and employees, and likewise all questions regarding the progress of the undertaking.

4. On questions of a technical character relating to the enterprise the Council has only a consultative voice, but on other questions a decisive voice, on condition, however, that the Administrative Director appointed by the Central Administration has the right to appeal from the orders of the Council to the Commissioner of the Central Administration.

5. The duty of acting upon decisions of the Economic Administrative Council belongs to the Administrative Director.

6. The Council of the enterprise has the right to make representation to the Central Administration regarding a change of the directors of the enterprise, and to present its own candidates.

7. Depending on the size and importance of the enterprise, the Central Administration may appoint several technical and administrative directors.

8. The composition of the Economic Administrative Council of the enterprise consists of (a) a representative of the workmen of the undertaking; (b) a representative of the other employees; (c) a representative of the highest technical and commercial personnel; (d) the directors of the undertaking, appointed by the Central Administration; (e) representatives of the local or regional council of professional unions, of the people's economic council, of the council of workmen's deputies, and of the professional council of that branch of industry to which the given enterprise belongs; (f) a representative of the workmen's coöperative council; and (g) a representative of the Soviet of peasants' deputies of the corresponding region.

9. In the composition of the Economic Administrative Council of the enterprise, representatives of workmen and other employees, as mentioned under (a) and (b) of Article 8, may furnish only half of the number of members.

10. The workmen's control of nationalized undertakings is attained by leaving all declarations and orders of the factory committee, or of the controlling commission, to the judgment and decision of the Economic Administrative Council of the enterprise.

11. The workmen, employees, and highest technical and commercial personnel of nationalized undertakings are in duty bound before the Russian Soviet Republic to observe strict industrial discipline, and to carry out conscientiously and accurately the work assigned to them. To the Economic Administrative Council are given judicial powers, including that of dismissal without notice for longer or shorter periods, together with the declaration of a boycott for non-proletariat recognition of their rights and duties.

12. In the case of those industrial branches for which central administrations have not yet been formed, all their rights are vested in provincial councils of national economy, and in corresponding industrial sections of the Supreme Council of National Economy.

13. The estimates and plan of work of a nationalized undertaking must be presented by its Economic Administrative Council to the central administration of a given industrial branch at least as often as once in three months, through the provincial organizations, where such have been established.

14. The management of nationalized undertakings, where such management has heretofore been organized on other prin-

ciples because of the absence of a general plan and general orders for the whole of Russia, must now be reorganized, in accordance with the present regulation, within the next three months [*i. e.*, by the end of May, new style].

15. For the consideration of the declarations of the Economic Administrative Council concerning the activity of the directors of the undertaking at the central administration of a given branch of industry, a special section is established, composed one-third of representatives of general governmental, political, and economic institutions of the proletariat, one-third of representatives of workmen and other employees of the given industrial branch, and one-third of representatives of the directing, technical, and commercial personnel and its professional organizations.

16. The present order must be posted on the premises of each nationalized undertaking.

Note: Small nationalized enterprises are managed on similar principles, with the proviso that the duties of technical and administrative directors may be combined in one person, and the numerical strength of the Economic Administrative Council may be cut down by the omission of representatives of one or another institution or organization.

PART II.

17. A Central Administration [Principal Committee] for each nationalized branch of industry is to be established in connection with the Supreme Council of National Economy, to be composed one-third of representatives of workmen and employees of a given industrial branch; one-third of representatives of the general proletariat, general governmental, political, and economic organizations and institutions (Supreme Council of National Economy, the People's Commissars, All-Russian Council of Professional Unions, All-Russian Council of Workmen's Coöperative Unions, Central Executive Committee of the Councils of Workmen's Delegates) and one-third of representatives of scientific bodies, of the supreme technical and commercial personnel, and of democratic organizations of all Russia (Council of the Congresses of All Russia, coöperative unions of consumers, councils of peasants' deputies).

18. The Central Administration selects its bureau, for which all orders of the Central Administration are obligatory, which conducts the current work and carries into effect the general plans for the undertaking.

19. The Central Administration organizes provincial and

local administrations of a given industrial branch, on principles similar to those on which its own organization is based.

20. The rights and duties of each Central Administration are indicated in the order concerning the establishment of each of them, but in each case each Central Administration unites in its own hands (a) the management of the enterprises of a given industrial branch, (b) their financing, (c) their technical unification or reconstruction, (d) standardization of the working conditions of the given industrial branch.

21. All orders of the Supreme Council of National Economy are obligatory for each Central Administration; the Central Administration comes into contact with the Supreme Council, as represented by the bureau of productive organization of the Supreme Council of National Economy, through the corresponding productive sections.

22. When the Central Administration for any industrial branch which has not yet been nationalized is organized, it has the right to sequester the enterprises of the given branch, and equally, without sequestration, to prevent its managers completely or in part from engaging in its administration, appoint commissioners, give orders, which are obligatory, to the owners of non-nationalized enterprises, and incur expenses on account of these enterprises for measures which the Central Administration may consider necessary; and likewise to combine into a technical whole separate enterprises or parts of the same, to transfer from some enterprises to others fuel and customers' orders, and establish prices upon articles of production and commerce.

23. The Central Administration controls imports and exports of corresponding goods for a period which it determines, for which purpose it forms a part of the general governmental organizations of external commerce.

24. The Central Administration has the right to concentrate in its hands and in institutions established by it, both the entire preparation of articles necessary for a given branch of industry (raw material, machinery, etc.), and the disposal to enterprises subject to it of all products and acceptance of orders for them.

PART III.

25. Upon the introduction of nationalization into any industrial branch, or into any individual enterprise, the corresponding Central Administration (or the temporary Central Administration appointed with its rights) takes under its management

the nationalized enterprises, each separately, and preserves the large ones as separate administrative units, annexing to them the smaller ones.

26. Until the nationalized enterprises have been taken over by the Central Administration (or principal commissary), all former managers or directorates must continue their work in its entirety in the usual manner, and under the supervision of the corresponding commissioner (if one has been appointed), taking all measures necessary for the preservation of the national property and for the continuous course of operations.

27. The Central Administration and its organs establish new managements and technical administrative directorates of enterprises.

28. Technical administrative directorates of nationalized enterprises are organized according to Part I of this decree.

29. The management of a large undertaking, treated as a separate administrative unit, is organized with a view to securing, in as large a measure as possible, the utilization of the technical and commercial experience accumulated by the undertaking; for which purpose there are included in the composition of the new management not only representatives of the laborers and employees of the enterprise (to the number of one-third of the general numerical strength of the management) and of the Central Administration itself (to the number of one-third or less as the Central Administration shall see fit), but also, as far as possible, members of former managements, excepting persons specially removed by the Central Administration, and, upon their refusal, representatives of any special competent organizations, even if they are not proletariat (to a number not exceeding one-third of the general membership of the management).

30. When nationalization is introduced, whether of the entire branch of the industry or of separate enterprises, the Central Administrations are permitted, in order to facilitate the change, to pay to the highest technical and commercial personnel their present salaries, and even, in case of refusal on their part to work and the impossibility of filling their places with other persons, to introduce for their benefit obligatory work and to bring suit against them.

31. The former management of each nationalized undertaking must prepare a report for the last year of operation and an inventory of the undertaking, in accordance with which inventory the new management verifies the properties taken over.

The actual taking over of the enterprise is done by the new management immediately upon its confirmation by the principal committee, without waiting for the presentation of the inventory and report.

32. Upon receipt in their locality of notice of the nationalization of an enterprise, and until the organization of the management and its administration by the Central Administration (or the principal commissary, or institution having the rights of the principal commissary) the workmen and employees of the given enterprise, and, if possible, also the Council of Workmen's Deputies, the Council of National Economy, and Council of Professional Unions, select temporary commissars, under whose supervision and observation (and, if necessary, under whose management) the activity of the undertaking continues. The workmen and employees of the given enterprise, and the regional councils of national economy, of professional unions, and of workmen's delegates have the right also to organize temporary managements and directorates of nationalized enterprises until the same are completely established by the Central Administration.

33. If the initiative for the nationalization of a given enterprise comes, not from the general governmental and proletarian organs authorized for that purpose, but from the workmen of a given enterprise or from some local or regional organization, then they propose to the Supreme Council of National Economy, as represented by its bureau of productive organization, that the necessary steps be undertaken through the proper production sections, according to the decree of February 28 regarding the method of confiscating enterprises.

34. In exceptional cases local labor organizations are given the right to take temporarily under their management the given enterprise, if circumstances do not permit of awaiting the decision of the question in the regular order, but on condition that such action be immediately brought to the notice of the nearest provincial council of national economy, which then puts a temporary sequestration upon the enterprise pending the complete solution of the question of nationalization by the Supreme Council of National Economy; or, if it shall consider the reasons insufficient or nationalization clearly inexpedient, or a prolonged sequestration unnecessary, it directs a temporary sequestration or even directly reestablishes the former management of the enterprise under its supervision, or introduces into the compo-

sition of the management representatives of labor organizations.

35. The present order must be furnished by the professional unions of all Russia to all their local divisions, and by the councils of factory committees to all factory committees, and must be published in full in the *Izvestia* of all provincial councils of workmen's and peasants' deputies.

For the Bureau of Organization of Production
of the Supreme Council of National Economy:

V. LARIN

Superintendent:

SHEVERDIN

March 7, 1918

Price Committees

1. Although the shops in the large cities have not received any goods during the last few months, and all the articles in them were purchased earlier by the proprietors at comparatively low prices, nevertheless at the present time the proprietors demand for these goods prices much higher than those which prevailed four months ago. Accordingly, an examination of all books of all shops in all cities and settlements with a population of not less than 10,000 is ordered.

2. In view of the obvious necessity of control over the fixing of prices, committees on prices are created for every class of commercial establishment (dry-goods, haberdashery, hardware, groceries, etc.)

3. The determination of those branches of commerce for each of which a special committee on prices is created is left to a commission of representatives of the local Soviet of Workmen's Deputies, the city council, and the union of commercial-industrial employees in equal numbers (three each from those organizations).

4. The same commission determines which commercial establishments are within the jurisdiction of each committee on prices.

5. Committees on prices, in accordance with this ordinance, are to be created without fail in every city and settlement with a population of not less than 10,000.

6. The members of the committee on prices comprise two representatives of the respective section of commercial-indus-

trial employees, two representatives of consumers' leagues, two representatives of proprietors of the respective commercial establishments, one statistician, and one book-keeper, chosen by the local Soviet of Workmen's Deputies.

7. The committee on prices controls a given branch of commerce in its entirety and directs it on the following principles:

(a) the verification of the disbursements of the commercial establishment for the acquisition, keeping, and organization of the sale of goods, and additional expenses connected with the conduct of the business;

(b) the determination, on this basis, of the normal average price of each product for a given city;

(c) the fixing of an average amount of profit;

(d) the apportionment of the profit among all the shops, with the right of taking as a whole all disbursements and all incomes of all shops of a given branch of commerce in a given city, but so calculated that all proprietors who are personally engaged in their business, and their families, shall be secured at least a suitable maintenance.

8. The committee on prices controls the sources of supply of shops for articles in which they deal, and takes measures for the uninterrupted delivery to the shops of those articles in proper quantities, and in extreme cases, at the expense of the proprietors, making necessary expenditures and organizing the temporary management of those shops whose proprietors cease trading or who maliciously do not take proper measures for securing the supply of goods for the shop, or who violate the rules of the committee.

9. For the unification of the supply of goods to shops, the committee on prices assumes the duty of a purchasing centre which supplies all stores under its control; while the proprietors, for that purpose, place at its disposal all their connections, knowledge, and technical and administrative apparatus, and supply such funds as they ordinarily disburse for supplying their shops with goods. The committee on prices has the right to organize purchasing centres, and may increase, in case of necessity, the representation of the proprietors of shops on the committee to four members instead of two.

10. The committee on prices sees to it that the shops under its control carry out all regulations of the authorities regarding the distribution of products among the population, whether by cards or on some other basis.

11. The committee on prices of each city elects representatives to the all-city committee on prices, which coördinates the activity of separate committees under the direction of the central, regional, and local boards of national economy, and in accordance with their regulations.

12. For the expense connected with the business of the committees on prices and the maintenance of their personnel, a deduction from the profits of the commercial establishments under their control is made in suitable proportions and by their order.

13. Executive authority for carrying out this ordinance in each city, including the formation of a commission provided for in Clause 3, is given to local trade unions of commercial-industrial employees, and, in case of the absence of such, to the local Soviet of Workmen's Deputies; or, in the absence of such Soviet, to the city council, or, in case of the absence of such city council, to the local consumers' leagues.

14. This ordinance shall be put into effect not later than the month of February. Persons guilty of violating it are liable to imprisonment for a period not longer than one year, and to a fine at the discretion of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

Committee on Prices of the Supreme Council of
National Economy:

V. SMIRNOV

N. LARIN

January 30, 1918

The Supply of Agricultural Implements

To factory and mill committees and representatives of manufacturing enterprises.

THE Supreme Board of National Economy has now undertaken the organization of the entire business of supplying the agricultural population with agricultural machinery and implements. In order that all this work may be carried out successfully, it is necessary that the Supreme Board of National Economy should have at its disposal exact information about all those establishments which at this moment have already changed or are ready to change to the production of agricultural machinery. Only with all this information at hand will it be possible to organize systematically this branch of national economy, which is most important for the Russian Republic, and to avoid

in the future those ills which may be caused by an unorganized change from war production to peace work. Moreover, all the information is necessary for the apportionment of orders for agricultural machines and implements, which the Supreme Board of National Economy will soon place.

In view of what has been said, we urgently request all factory and mill committees and manufacturers, or their organizations, to furnish in writing the most complete information about their establishments which have to do with the manufacture of agricultural machinery, indicating the number of workmen, the machine equipment, and the possible minimum production per month, together with a statement of the machines and implements (type and patent), necessary in rural economy, for which they can take orders.

In view of the exceptional importance of the matter of supplying our rural economy, we respectfully request the provincial papers to reprint this appeal.

The Supreme Council of National Economy.

Orders of the People's Commissar of Education of the Western Provinces and Front

THE following orders are selected from a group of six educational documents published at Petrograd, March 10, 1918. The omitted orders, Nos. 3-5, relate to the budget for 1919 and to routine matters.

No. 1

To all primary and secondary educational institutions of the western provinces.

I propose to the administration of all the above-mentioned educational institutions, from the date of the publication of this order, not to discharge students for non-payment of dues. As to those who have already been discharged before this order was published, they must immediately be reinstated.

I propose to all departments of public education in local Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, to at-

tend strictly to the carrying out of my order. The question of the legal position of students who have not paid their school dues will be explained in the near future.

No special notification will be given to each educational institution, and the present order becomes the law of the land from the date of its publication in the newspaper *Sovietskaya Pravda* [*Soviet Truth*].

No. 2

Having in mind to afford to the large popular masses access to books, the Commissariat of Public Education will shortly proceed to regulate the library business and its reorganization on new principles. In view of this the Commissar directs that:

I. All libraries found within the boundaries of the western provinces and front, and belonging to municipalities, public institutions, or organizations of various sorts, or to private persons, are taken over for the benefit of public educational institutions in local Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, and, in the city of Smolensk, by the local section of public education of the provincial commissariat.

II. All institutions, organizations, and private persons possessing libraries in the city of Smolensk must, within five days following the date of the publication of this order in the newspaper *Sovietskaya Pravda*, present to the Commissariat of Public Education exact information concerning:

- (1) the location of the libraries belonging to them;
- (2) the number of volumes found in the libraries;
- (3) the contents of the libraries (complete catalogues of the books must be presented, and in case such do not exist, then general information concerning the character of the books collected);
- (4) the periodical publications subscribed to by the libraries;
- (5) the number of subscribers;
- (6) the rules adopted for the use of these books.

Note: This order does not affect persons who have libraries consisting of less than 500 volumes, if these libraries are not intended for public readers.

III. In case reading-rooms are found at such libraries, it is necessary to indicate:

- (1) the list of periodical publications found in the reading-room;
- (2) statistical data, if such are at hand, regarding the reading-room visitors.

IV. Institutions, organizations, and private persons possess-

ing libraries outside the boundaries of the city of Smolensk and of the Government of Smolensk must present the information indicated above, within a week from the date of the publication of this order, to the proper section of local Soviets of Workmen's, Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. The latter, upon receipt of the data, must furnish copies of the same to the Commissar of Public Education of the western provinces and front.

V. Those who fail to comply with this order will be turned over to the Military Revolutionary Tribunal.

No. 6

It is the duty of all owners of moving-picture houses in the city of Smolensk, from the date of the publication of this order in the newspaper *Sovietskaya Pravda*, to present for approval to the provincial Commissariat of Public Education the programmes and librettos of the pictures proposed to be exhibited by them.

It is forbidden to show pictures not approved by the Commissariat.

In those cases in which the Commissariat shall find it necessary the pictures, before being shown to the public, must be shown for examination to persons specially designated by the Commissariat.

Moving-picture enterprises not complying with this order will be at once confiscated.

The Commissar of Public Education of the Western Provinces and Front:

PIKEL

Abolition of Inheritance

I. Inheritance, whether by law or by will, is abolished. After the death of an owner, the property which belonged to him, whether movable or immovable, becomes the property of the Government of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic.

Note: The discontinuance and transfer of rights of utilization of farm lands is determined by the rules provided in the fundamental law of the socialization of the land.

II. Until the issuance of a decree dealing with general social arrangements, relatives who are in need (*i. e.*, those who do not possess a minimum maintenance), and who are incapable of work—such relatives being in a directly ascending or descending line, full or half-brothers or sisters, or spouse, of the deceased—receive support from the property left by the deceased.

Note 1: No distinction is made between the relationship that arises within wedlock and that which arises outside of wedlock.

Note 2: Adopted relatives or children and their descendants are put upon the same footing as relatives by descent whether as to those who adopted them or as to those who have been adopted.

III. If there is not enough of the property remaining to support a spouse and all surviving relatives, as enumerated above, then the most needy of them must be provided for first.

IV. The amount of allowance to be given a spouse and surviving relatives from the property of the deceased is determined by the institution conducting the affairs of social security in the Governments, and in Moscow and Petrograd by the municipal Soviets of Workmen's and Peasants' Deputies, in agreement with the persons who have the right to receive the allowance, and, in case of dispute between them, by the local court, according to the usual legal procedure. Cases of this sort are under the jurisdiction of the Soviets of Workmen's and Peasants' Deputies and the local courts of the last place of residence of the deceased.

V. All property of the deceased, other than that enumerated in Article IX of this decree, comes under the jurisdiction of the local Soviet, which turns it over to the bureaus or institutions having control in those localities of similar property of the Russian Republic, according to the last place of residence of the deceased or according to the place where the property is situated.

VI. The local Soviet publishes, for the purpose of general notification, the death of the property owner, and calls upon the persons who have a right to receive support from the said property to appear within a year from the date of the publication.

VII. Those who do not declare their claims before the expiration of the year following the publication, as provided in the above article, lose their right to receive support from the property of the deceased.

VIII. From the property of the deceased are paid, first, the expenses of the administration of the property. The relatives and spouse of the deceased receive their allowances before the creditors are paid. The creditors of the deceased, if their claims are recognized as proper to be paid, are satisfied from the property after the deductions indicated above, on condition, in case the property is insufficient to cover all demands of the creditors, that the general principles of the meeting of creditors be applied.

IX. If the property of the deceased does not exceed 10,000 rubles, or in particular consists of a farm house, domestic furniture, and means for economic production by work, in either city or village, it comes under the immediate control of the spouse and relatives enumerated in Article II of the present decree, who are present. The method of control and management of the property is arranged by agreement between the spouse and relatives, and, in case of their disagreement, by the local tribunal.

X. The present decree is retroactive as regards all inheritances discovered before it was issued, if they have not yet been acquired by the heirs, or, if acquired, if they have not yet been taken possession of by the heirs.

XI. All suits now pending respecting inheritances, the probate of wills, the confirmation of the rights of inheritance, etc., are deemed to be discontinued, and the respective hereditary property is to be at once turned over for administration to the local Soviets or institutions indicated in Article V of the present decree.

Note: Concerning hereditary properties discovered before the present decree is issued—properties enumerated in Article IX of the present decree—a special regulation will be issued.

XII. The People's Commissar of Justice is empowered, in agreement with the Commissariat of Social Security and Work, to issue a detailed instruction concerning the enforcement of the present decree.

The present decree is of force from the date of its signature, and is to be put into operation by telegraph.

President of the Central Executive Committee:
SVERDLOV

Secretary of the Central Executive Committee:
AVANESOV

April 27, 1918

Grain Control

THE disastrous undermining of the country's food supply, the serious heritage of the four years' war, continues to extend more and more, and to be more and more acute. While the consuming provincial Governments are starving, in the producing Governments there are at the present moment, as before, large reserves of grain of the harvests of 1916 and 1917

not yet even threshed. This grain is in the hands of tight-fisted village dealers and profiteers, of the village bourgeoisie. Well fed and well provided for, having accumulated enormous sums of money obtained during the years of war, the village bourgeoisie remains stubbornly deaf and indifferent to the wailings of starving workmen and peasant poverty, and does not bring the grain to the collecting points. The grain is held with the hope of compelling the Government to raise repeatedly the prices of grain, at the same time that the holders sell their grain at home at fabulous prices to grain speculators.

An end must be put to this obstinacy of the greedy village grain profiteers. The food experience of former years showed that the breaking of fixed prices and the denial of grain monopoly, while lessening the possibility of feasting for our group of capitalists, would make bread completely inaccessible to our many millions of workmen and would subject them to inevitable death from starvation.

The answer to the violence of grain owners toward the starving poor must be violence toward the bourgeoisie.

Not a pood should remain in the hands of those holding the grain, except the quantity needed for sowing the fields and provisioning their families until the new harvest.

This policy must be put into force at once, especially since the German occupation of the Ukraine compels us to get along with grain resources which will hardly suffice for sowing and curtailed use.

Having considered the situation thus created, and taking into account that only with the most rigid calculation and equal distribution of all grain reserves can Russia pass through the food crisis, the Central Executive Committee of all Russia has decreed:

1. Confirming the fixity of the grain monopoly and fixed prices, and also the necessity of a merciless struggle with grain speculators, to compel each grain owner to declare the surplus above what is needed to sow the fields and for personal use, according to established normal quantities, until the new harvest, and to surrender the same within a week after the publication of this decision in each village. The order of these declarations is to be determined by the People's Food Commissar through the local food organizations.

2. To call upon workmen and poor peasants to unite at once for a merciless struggle with grain hoarders.

3. To declare all those who have a surplus of grain and who do not bring it to the collecting points, and likewise those who waste grain reserves on illicit distillation of alcohol and do not bring them to the collecting points, enemies of the people; to turn them over to the Revolutionary Tribunal, imprison them for not less than ten years, confiscate their entire property, and drive them out forever from the communes; while the distillers are, besides, to be condemned to compulsory communal work.

In case an excess of grain which was not declared for surrender, in compliance with Article 1, is found in the possession of any one, the grain is to be taken away from him without pay, while the sum, according to fixed prices, due for the undeclared surpluses, is to be paid, one-half to the person who points out the concealed surpluses, after they have been placed at the collecting points, and the other half to the village commune. Declarations concerning the concealed surpluses are made by the local food organizations.

Further, taking into consideration that the struggle with the food crisis demands the application of quick and decisive measures, that the more fruitful realization of these measures demands in its turn the centralization of all orders dealing with the food question in one organization, and that this organization appears to be the People's Food Commissar, the Central Executive Committee of all Russia hereby orders, for the more successful struggle with the food crisis, that the People's Food Commissar be given the following powers:

1. To publish obligatory regulations regarding the food situation, exceeding the usual limits of the People's Food Commissar's competence.

2. To abrogate the orders of local food bodies and other organizations contravening the plans and actions of the People's Commissar.

3. To demand from institutions and organizations of all departments the carrying out of the regulations of the People's Food Commissar in connection with the food situation without evasions and at once.

4. To use the armed forces in case resistance is shown to the removal of food grains or other food products.

5. To dissolve or reorganize the food agencies in places where they might resist the orders of the People's Commissar.

6. To discharge, transfer, turn over to the Revolutionary

Tribunal, or subject to arrest officials and employees of all departments and public organizations in case of interference with the orders of the People's Commissar.

7. To transfer the present powers, in addition to the right to subject to arrest, above, to other persons and institutions in various places, with the approval of the Council of the People's Commissars.

8. All regulations of the People's Commissar, related in character to the Department of Ways of Communciation and the Supreme Council of National Economy, are to be carried through upon consultation with the corresponding departments.

9. The regulations and orders of the People's Commissar, issued in accordance with the present powers, are verified by his collegium, which has the right, without suspending their operation, of referring them to the Council of Public Commissars.

10. The present decree becomes effective from the date of its signature and is to be put into operation by telegraph.

President of the Central Executive Committee of
All Russia:

VA. SVERDLOV

President of the Council of People's Commissars:
V. OULIANOV (LENIN)

Secretary of the Central Executive Committee of
All Russia:

AVANESOV

May 14, 1918

Government Publications

Taking into consideration on the one hand the idleness which for various reasons exists among printers, and on the other the scarcity of books, the People's Commissariat of Education through its literary publishing department and in coöperation with the departments of education outside the schools, school departments, and departments of science and art, and with the assistance of representatives of the printers' union and other interested societies, as the Commissariat shall see fit, and of experts specially invited by it, shall immediately undertake extensive publication.

First in order must come a cheap popular edition of the Rus-

sian classics. Those works for which the period of authors' rights has ended must be republished.

The works of all authors thus transferred from private to public ownership may, by a special order of the National Commissar of Education regarding each author, be declared a Government monopoly, for a period, however, not exceeding five years. The Commissariat is to make use of this right with regard to those literary celebrities whose works, in accordance with this law, become the property of the people.

The publication of these works may be arranged in two series:

1. A complete scientific edition, the editorship of which should be entrusted to the department of Russian language and letters of the Academy of Sciences (after its democratization and adaptation to the new governmental and public life of Russia).

2. An abbreviated edition of selected works. Each selection is to constitute a single, compact volume. In the selection the editor is to be guided, among other considerations, by the suitability of the works to the working people, for whose benefit these popular editions are intended. Both the entire collection and separate, more important works are to be accompanied by prefaces by authoritative critics, historians of literature, etc. To edit these popular publications a special collegium should be created of prominent representatives of educational, literary, and scientific societies, specially invited experts, and delegates of workmen's organizations. Editors, confirmed by this Commissariat of Publication Control, must present to that body their plans of publication together with their commentaries of every description.

The popular edition of classics is to be sold at cost, and, if means shall permit, even below cost, and may even be given free through the libraries which serve the working democracy.

The Government Publishing House should further see to the publication of all sorts of text-books. The bringing up to date and correction of old manuals should be carried on through a special commission on manuals, consisting of delegates from educational, scientific, and democratic organizations and specially invited experts.

The Government Publishing House is likewise granted the right to subsidize publications, both periodicals and books, undertaken by societies and individuals and acknowledged to be useful to the general public, with the proviso that these sub-

sidies, if the publication proves to be profitable, shall be refunded to the Government as a first lien.

In order to undertake immediately this important public business of the Soviet of People's Commissars, it is proposed to appropriate and place at the disposal of the Government Commissariat of Education the sum of a million and a half rubles.

All printing orders should be given exclusively at the direction of the printers' union, which regulates its distribution through the autonomous commissariats of the various printing offices.

The People's Commissar:

A. V. LUNACHARSKY

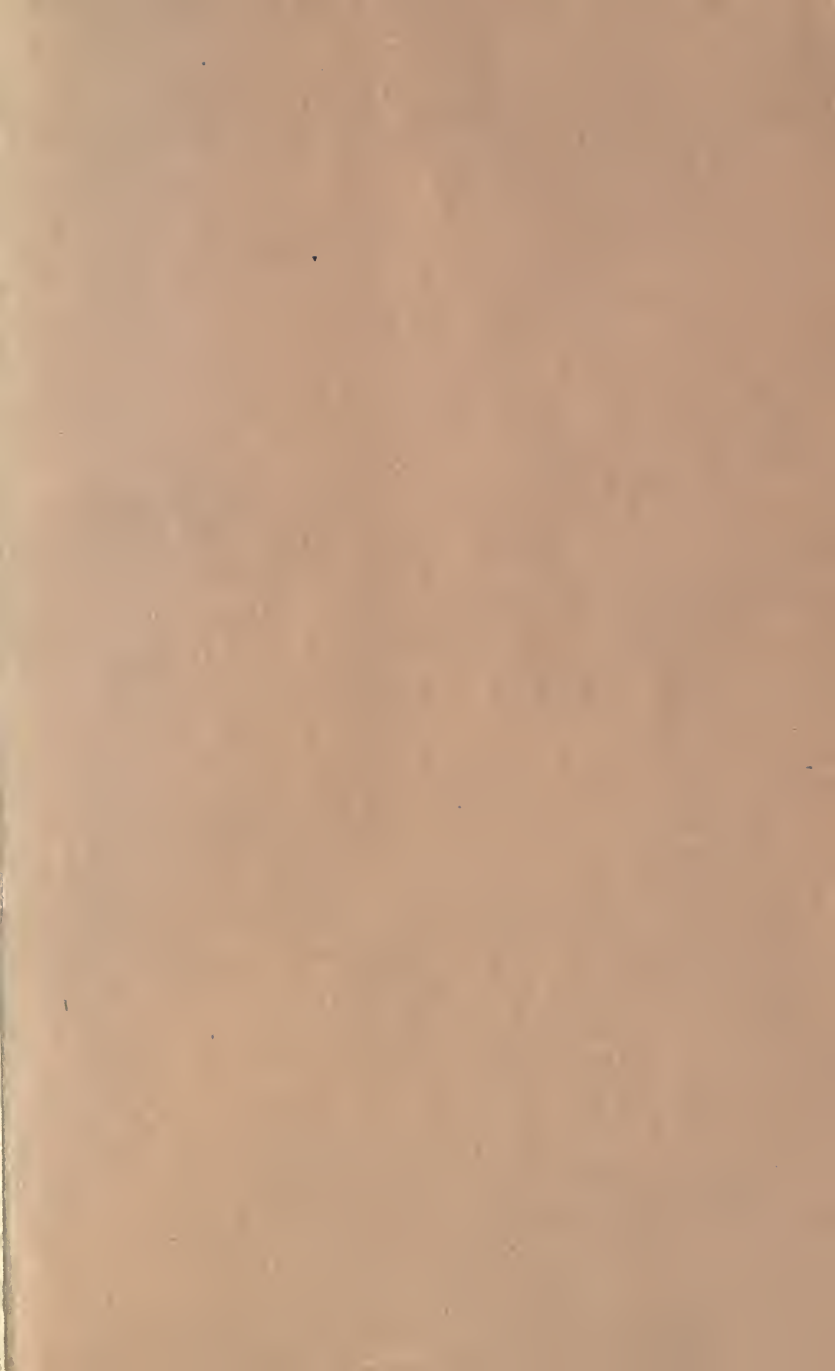
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